



# THE NATION

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## EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE serious illness of the King has called forth, not only in Great Britain, but throughout the Empire and in many foreign countries, remarkable demonstrations of anxiety and sympathy. They are a tribute both to the peculiar position of the throne among British institutions, and to the qualities of its present occupant. A constitutional monarchy, with all its anomalies in theory and conveniences in practice, appeals strongly to that blend of the practical and the sentimental which foreigners find so hard to understand in the British character. The importance of the Crown as the keystone of that strange structure, the British Commonwealth of Nations, has increased rather than diminished with the growth of responsible self-government in its component parts. The anxiety with which the daily bulletins have been studied bears witness alike to the recognition of these facts and to a widespread appreciation of the earnestness and tact with which through years of heavy strain, His Majesty King George V. has fulfilled the difficult rôle assigned to him.

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Mr. Neville Chamberlain's speech in introducing the Local Government Bill on Monday was a great Parliamentary success; but those who read it through in cold print will not find it easy to understand the immense enthusiasm with which it was received by his supporters. The lucidity with which Mr. Chamberlain, speaking almost without recourse to notes, expounded the provisions of his extremely complicated Bill certainly deserves the highest praise; but the Con-

servative emotion was no mere æsthetic appreciation of a masterly technical performance. It was primarily an emotion of joyful relief at the discovery that so strong a case could be put forward for the Bill. Somehow Mr. Chamberlain succeeded in conveying to his party the impression that all objections had been satisfactorily answered, and that the measure might not therefore be disastrously unpopular after all. We are afraid that this impression will prove a somewhat fleeting one; for Mr. Chamberlain's speech contained no real answer to any of the main criticisms that have been brought against this Bill.

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On the question of the formula, for instance, Mr. Chamberlain made no attempt to justify the anomalous nature of the redistribution of local burdens which will follow from his scheme. He confined himself to expatiating on the intrinsic merits of his formula as a measure of the real needs of a locality. Population, he observed, is the main criterion of local needs; but it is not the only one. Rateable value is relevant, so is unemployment, so is the number of children under five. The formula is framed so as to take account of all these factors; what fairer one could be devised? But to discuss the formula *in vacuo* in this way is to ignore the whole point of the real criticism, namely, that it is applied to purposes for which it is utterly inappropriate. For the purpose of distributing the new Exchequer money and the money which is to replace the discontinued grants, Mr. Chamberlain's formula may be irreproachable in its equity. But, for distributing the money which is to make good what the

local authorities lose from derating (which is over half the total sum to be distributed), a formula of local needs is an inherently preposterous idea. Under *this* head a wealthy residential district which has no industry at all, and which therefore loses nothing by derating, *must* gain, no matter how small its local needs, and no matter how the formula is weighted; and accordingly, under this head, the more industrial regions must tend to lose. In short, as regards about half the money, the formula makes for a more equitable, and as regards the other half for a less equitable, redistribution; so that, taking the two halves together, one would expect the results to be a toss-up, which is exactly what they are.

The essential arbitrariness of the redistribution vitiates many of Mr. Chamberlain's arguments on other points, notably on the vital issue of percentage grants. Mr. Chamberlain's case against percentage grants is that, under them, a poor district may get less assistance from the Exchequer than a wealthy district, which is unfair. This argument might have some weight if the redistribution effected by Mr. Chamberlain was demonstrably fairer; but since it is so arbitrary that it is difficult to say whether, on balance, it is more fair or more unfair, the argument has no weight at all. We are left with the solid fact that the stimulus to develop maternity and child welfare services, which a 50 per cent. grant from the State supplies, will be withdrawn. Mr. Chamberlain affects surprise that anyone should contend that this will be detrimental to these services. Would he seriously maintain that houses would have been built on the scale on which they have been built if the present Government had abolished the housing subsidy when they came into office, and had distributed money to the localities in accordance with the formula?

The complicated discussions, preliminary to the appointment of a Committee of Experts to investigate the problem of Reparations, have been carried several steps forward since October 30th, when the German Government presented its Note concerning the constitution of the proposed Committee. The British, French, and Belgian Governments have presented memoranda setting out their views of the underlying principles that must form the basis of any final settlement. The German Government has also submitted a memorandum, following fairly closely the lines of Herr Stresemann's speech of November 19th, referred to in our last issue. The British Ambassadors in Paris, Rome, and Brussels have communicated to the Governments to which they are accredited the main lines of the British Government's draft reply to the original German Note. As a result of this exchange of views the British authorities are said to be decidedly optimistic, both as to an early invitation to Washington and appointment of the experts, and as to the prospects of a settlement. There has been some angry discussion in the French and German Press, due to an unauthorized and incorrect summary of the German memorandum and some misunderstanding as to the part to be played by the Reparations Commission in the appointment of experts; but this has died down, and the general atmosphere is hopeful. It will be extraordinarily difficult, however, to settle the Reparations question even if it is tackled by itself; if the French persist in linking it with Rhineland evacuation, the chances of a general settlement seem very remote.

It would undoubtedly be greatly to the advantage of all parties concerned in the Reparations discussions

if the present German Government could get a firmer hold of office. At present, its cohesion depends on a working agreement between the leaders of five parties, and the agreement is far more precise upon what the Government undertakes *not* to do than upon any other point. If these five parties are to coalesce into a Grand Coalition, something far more binding and comprehensive will have to be devised. The indefatigable Herr Muller is preparing scheme after scheme for forming a Grand Coalition, and many people in high position, notably Herr Stresemann, have given the project strong support; but the practical details are as difficult to arrange as ever. The problem is complicated by the fact that the binding, coalition-making agreement must be as precise upon Prussian as upon Reich affairs. Herr Muller, at least is still hopeful.

The petition addressed to the French Minister of Public Instruction by eighty-three pupils—about half—of the Ecole Normale Supérieure is an encouraging symptom of a reaction against the Chauvinist tendencies that have characterized the younger generation of French "intellectuals" for many years, the Chauvinist revival having begun some years before the war. At present pupils of the Ecole Normale Supérieure and certain other post-graduate schools in the French University, instead of doing their military service in the ordinary way, undergo compulsory training as officers for two years, and at the end of their course become sub-lieutenants of the reserve. The signatories of the petition ask to be relieved of this "privilege," and to be allowed, if they wish, to do their military service in the ranks like other citizens, and they ask it on the ground that it is "an outrage on the liberty of conscience" to force a young man to administer a system of which he disapproves, whereas a private soldier, obliged by law to submit under protest to the system, has at any rate no responsibility for it. Not since the days of the Dreyfus Affair have so large a number of the pupils of the Ecole Normale Supérieure adopted so definitely anti-militarist an attitude, for the petition is by implication a manifesto against compulsory military service. The JOURNAL DES DÉBATS, by the way, attributes the petition to a revival of the pernicious influence of Anatole France on the younger generation, and there may be something in that view, for the reaction against Anatole France in his own country has had political rather than literary causes.

The negotiations just concluded between Great Britain and Japan are so important that it is remarkable so little has been heard of them. The two Governments have agreed that they will freely and frankly exchange views whenever they are in negotiation with the Chinese Government. Neither binds itself to steer the same diplomatic course as the other; but the objects they are striving for will be fully explained, and, presumably, discussed beforehand. Any other Power interested in the Chinese problem is invited to become a partner in this diplomatic clearing-house. In particular, Count Uchida, who conducted the negotiations on behalf of Japan, invited the participation of the United States, though it seems unlikely that this will be attained. It should be noted, however, that the arrangement is in strict harmony with the Washington Treaty, whereby the signatories bound themselves to exchange views upon subjects that might disturb their friendly relations.

The arrangement may be regarded in two lights. On the one hand, it may be considered as the first step

towards an Anglo-Japanese entente; for ententes are created far more by intimacy in diplomatic relations than by formal agreements. In so far as this serves as a corrective to the apprehensions aroused by the Singapore base, it is all to the good; but it contains, obviously, the possibility of more debatable implications. On the other hand, it must be looked at from the standpoint of its reaction on British relations with China. The agreement relates only to discussion; not necessarily to the acceptance of a joint policy; hence it should not conflict with the policy so admirably laid down in Sir Austen Chamberlain's famous memorandum. Chinese diplomacy, however, is more swayed by what public opinion thinks the Great Powers are doing than by their real intentions. It is certainly unfortunate, and was probably quite unexpected, that the announcement of this new arrangement should coincide with a temporary breakdown in the direct negotiations between Tokyo and Nanking.

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The difficult financial position of the miners' trade union organizations, and of the South Wales district in particular, is leading to reorganization with the purpose of increasing central control. The draft scheme for the centralization of the South Wales Miners' Federation has now been issued to the district lodges, to whom it has been referred for amendment before being finally presented for approval to a delegate conference of the whole area. According to the proposed scheme, the existing nineteen districts in South Wales and Monmouthshire, which have hitherto been almost completely self-governing, are to be replaced by six divisions, each of which will be administered by a council composed of delegates from the lodges, and elect its own officers and executives. The divisions will send delegates in proportion to their membership to the Central Executive Council of the Federation, with which the final authority will rest. On the financial side a still more direct blow is aimed at the power of the lodges. At present a member's contribution of 2s. per month is mulcted of 4d. by the lodge and 6d. by the district for their own expenditure before the remaining 1s. 2d. is passed on to the central fund. The new scheme provides that all contributions shall be sent directly, without deductions, to the central fund, and a finance committee of the Central Executive is to supervise the finance and expenditure of the Federation, including the divisions and lodges. Opposition to this loss of control is expected from some of the lodges, but it is believed that the influence of the Federation Executive is sufficient to carry the scheme through.

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The *TIMES* of Tuesday contained an interesting statement with regard to the broadcasting of political speeches. Some months ago, we are told, the B.B.C. proposed that the Government of the day should have one opportunity of broadcasting after each of the other two parties. Addresses would thus have been given in this order: Labour, Conservative, Liberal, Conservative, Labour, Conservative, and so on. It is not surprising to learn that this suggestion was accepted by the Conservative Party. The *TIMES* adds, however, that it was also accepted, in principle, by the Labour Party, but rejected by the Liberals.

"At a later conference the Conservatives maintained their point of view, but the Labour Party, contrary to expectations, supported the Liberals, and the conference broke down. There the matter rests for the present, but it will be noted that the proposals accepted by the

Conservatives were put forward, in an impartial and unbiased manner, by the British Broadcasting Corporation."

We do not doubt the political impartiality of the B.B.C., but in approaching this difficult question they had necessarily to consider first what would be acceptable to the Government. The original reaction of the Labour Party may perhaps have been due to an expectation that they would soon occupy the privileged position of a Government Party. The proposal is certainly too favourable to the Government of the day, since Ministers have many non-party opportunities of broadcasting.

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The evidence given before the Royal Commission on the Police, on Monday, by Mr. Freke Palmer, was of interest and importance. Mr. Palmer has been a solicitor practising principally at the Criminal Courts in London for forty-four years. He said that there had been a great change in the system adopted by the police in taking statements from prisoners since the War. Anything like a long detailed statement by a prisoner was so rare before the War that he could not recall a case in which one was made. The practice of taking long "voluntary" statements was not a desirable one. He suggested that, if an accused person said he wished to make a statement, he ought to be cautioned by an inspector or sergeant who was not interested in any way in the case. The statement should be in the accused's own handwriting, or, if he could not write sufficiently well, dictated by him and taken down in his own language. With regard to attacks made on the police about the way statements were taken, Mr. Palmer said he had read with amazement the statement by the late Commissioner of Police that it was a common line of defence to make complaints against the police, especially in murder cases. He did not agree with that statement. He had been engaged in seven murder cases since the War, and he had never attacked the police yet. If attacks were made on the police, they were made entirely on the instructions given by the prisoner and after serious consultation as to whether it was politic to make them.

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The death of Admiral Reinhardt Scheer removes one of the typical and significant figures of war-time Germany. When High Admiral von Tirpitz expounded his plans for a great German fleet, he found, greatly to his surprise, that the territorial nobility would be indifferent, and that the mass of his supporters would be Germans of the middle class. Admiral Scheer was representative of the cultured and lettered bourgeoisie which gave driving force to Admiral von Tirpitz's navy laws. He was the son of a public school master, and throughout his career he showed the extraordinary capacity for detailed work which is so characteristic of his social caste. He became a great seaman and a great fleet commander solely by learning all that there was to be known about torpedo construction, fleet signals, manœuvring circles, and high explosives. His knowledge served him in good stead, for though Jutland was no German victory, it was a great German achievement. Few fleet commanders could have extracted themselves so well from a dangerous position as did Scheer. His hereditary qualities did not desert him when the war was over. He spent the rest of his life asking Republican Germany not to forget his old companions. The Steel Helmets, the Black Reichswehr, and the Organization's Consul did not know him; neither did he know them.



## ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

ON Thursday of last week Lord Lee of Fareham delivered a noteworthy speech on Anglo-American relations. Perhaps its significance was increased rather than diminished by the fact that the occasion was not, on the face of it, an appropriate one for launching new suggestions on matters of high international policy. It was the eighty-ninth anniversary festival dinner of the Newsvendors' Benevolent and Provident Institution. But the American Ambassador, Mr. Houghton, was the principal guest of the evening; and Lord Lee was proposing his health. He referred to the "sorry business" of the Anglo-French compromise, and declared that the "one redeeming feature" was that it must be obvious to all the world "that the hearts and heads of the British people were sound, and that the Government Departments concerned were not representing either their views or their intentions." He observed that "in doing business with America, England had better do it alone, unhampered by any embarrassing partnership." Heart to heart talks were necessary between the two countries; and Lord Lee concluded by suggesting that the whole naval controversy should be relegated to a committee of two, say Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Hoover, or perhaps Lord Balfour and Mr. Hughes, who should meet either in London or Washington "unembarrassed by the pressure of naval experts." If such a meeting could be arranged, Lord Lee was convinced that an agreement would be reached "not only upon disarmament, but upon the more vexed question of Freedom of the Seas."

This speech and this suggestion have attracted considerable attention here, but they have attracted even more in the United States. The *NEW YORK TIMES* recalls the fact that Lord Lee was not only one of the British delegates to the Washington Conference in 1921, but was at the time First Lord of the Admiralty, and it declares that "it may now be stated that it was to him more than to any other single individual that the inspiration of the Washington Naval Conference was due," Lord Lee having intimated, before the Conference was called, that Great Britain would agree to naval parity with America. It strongly supports the principle of his proposal; the details, it says, may not prove workable, the spirit is what matters, "to take the naval debate out of the hands of Parliament or Congress, away, at least temporarily, from technicians and experts, and to look for a settlement by men of large view and friendly understanding."

Lord Lee's suggestion has not only been received with interest on the other side of the Atlantic; it has stimulated alternative suggestions. Mr. Britten, who is Chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, proposes that his Committee should hold a joint meeting in Canada with a Committee of the British Parliament to discuss the naval controversy; and he has gone so far as to telegraph this suggestion to Mr. Baldwin. This is a novel idea;

but it should not be treated as a ridiculous one. It is the opposite of "taking the naval debate out of the hands of Parliament or Congress," but for that very reason it may represent the variety of "heart to heart talk" which would really be most helpful. We make very little use at present of what should be the surest antidote to Anglo-American misunderstanding, the fact that both nations speak the same language. That fact makes experiments in direct inter-Parliamentary diplomacy at least feasible; and when, as in this case, ignorance of the other country's point of view is at the bottom of the trouble, there is much to be said for such experiments.

The suggestions of Lord Lee and Mr. Britten are not the only suggestions of the kind that have lately been made. A few weeks ago the *TIMES* gave prominence to a letter from Dr. Flexner, suggesting that "a few of the finest and most objective minds on both sides of the water" should be asked to consider the whole question of Anglo-American relations and "report to the two nations all the facts, ponderable and imponderable, with such suggestions as they see fit to make." The profusion of such proposals by men whose opinions carry weight is a very noteworthy fact. It testifies to the deep and widespread uneasiness, among men who are not given to sensationalism or scaremongering, that Anglo-American relations are, to quote another New York newspaper, the *WORLD*, "at a point where, unless there is a decided turn for the better, they are almost certain to become much worse."

The fact that this uneasiness is so widely and deeply felt is, in our judgment, the most encouraging feature of the situation. There is no more untrustworthy maxim of traditional statesmanship than that which prescribes silence, secrecy, and passivity when the relations between two countries have taken an awkward turn. It is only when relations are so strained that there is an imminent possibility of war that it can ever be really wise to glose over friction and to conceal it as far as possible from the public eye. There is, fortunately, no imminent danger of war between Great Britain and the United States. But, along our present lines, we may very easily drift into a situation in which there will be such a danger. Against this there can be no better safeguard than that public opinion, in both countries, should be thoroughly alarmed.

War between Britain and America would not only be the most appalling calamity that we can envisage. It would be a manifest absurdity. The two peoples, despite their normal feelings of mutual irritation, have not the smallest desire to fight one another. They have both just signed a treaty whereby they renounce the idea of war with anybody. They have had no dispute on any political question of importance for many years; on most questions, and in most parts of the world, their influence is cast on the same side. The naval controversy is the sole cause of the friction that has arisen; and the naval controversy is essentially ridiculous. The two countries are so far away from



one another that the precise balance of their naval strengths is not a vital matter to either; if it did come to a war between them, it would not be this that would decide the issue. In these circumstances it is absurd that, having agreed upon the principle of parity, they cannot agree as to its application.

None the less, if the naval controversy continues to be unwisely handled, it may easily lead to a very dangerous situation. If competition in naval armaments once seriously begins, it will engender so much mutual suspicion, so much genuine anxiety in each country as to the designs of the other, that the idea of an "inevitable war" will take root, and to win that war will become the chief preoccupation of both Governments. We shall look round for Allies, the United States will look round for bases. A strategic *motif* will enter into the rivalries between American and British business-men for the control of the oil-fields and raw materials. If matters ever reach this pitch, all the efforts of the Lord Lees and the Dr. Flexners will be powerless to avert a conflict.

That is why it is so important that those efforts should be made now. The present is the really critical phase of Anglo-American relations. It is vital that a serious competition in naval armaments should not begin.

The assurances of our Ministers ought, it is true, to rule out the possibility of any such competition. They have repeatedly told us that they have no intention of building against the United States; the latest assurance was contained in Mr. Baldwin's speech at the Albert Hall. These assurances are certainly not meaningless. They have been given in face of the strong probability that the United States will shortly embark on a large programme of 10,000-ton cruisers. We may feel certain, therefore, at the very least, that this American programme will not cause us to lay down additional cruisers next year or the year after. Two facts increase our confidence in this conclusion: (1) the awkwardness of the Budget situation (which is thus shown to be by no means an unmixed evil); (2) the fact that we have at present a substantial superiority in 10,000-ton cruisers, so that it must be several years in any case before America catches up.

But this last fact detracts somewhat from the value of the Ministerial assurances to which we have referred. It is easy at the moment to say that we shall be quite unmoved by an American programme of fifteen large cruisers, especially when we hope that, by saying so, we may diminish the likelihood of all the fifteen being built. It will be another matter to remain unmoved when the last five of the fifteen cruisers are actually laid down. We feel very far from confident that the British Admiralty would be content, if it came to the point, to be outbuilt by the United States; or that the Admiralty, in objecting, would not be upheld by such a Cabinet as we have now.

Thus the danger of a race in naval armaments is not an imminent, but, failing agreed limitation, it is, we believe, a very serious danger. We do not think that the present moment is a good one for any official attempt from this side to retrieve the situation. We suspect that any attempt of the kind which our present Government might make just now would be likely to

do more harm than good; and we await with considerable apprehension the reply which they have promised to make to the last Note from the United States. But matters cannot be allowed to drift, as they are now drifting, indefinitely—or indeed for very long. Public opinion must insist that the first favourable opportunity is seized for a new attempt, conceived in the spirit of Lord Lee's speech, to place Anglo-American relations on a really cordial footing.

## CONSCRIPTION AND LIMITATION

**M**R. LLOYD GEORGE was undoubtedly right in saying in his speech the other day in the House of Commons that a conscript army is as consistent with limitation of numbers as is a professional army, but in practice limitation of reserves will never be possible in France without the abolition of conscription. The French people tolerate compulsory military service only because it is universal, and it would be impossible to enforce a system of compulsory recruitment by ballot or any other method of selection. No Government that proposed such a system would last twenty-four hours.

There is a growing feeling in France, especially in the working class, against conscription, which, apart, from any other consideration, inflicts terrible hardships. The majority of young men are, of course, already earning their own living at the age of twenty-one. It is bad enough that they should be taken away from their work, deprived of a year's earnings, shut up in barracks, and paid a halfpenny a day, but they are not the only sufferers. In many cases their families are wholly or partially dependent on their earnings. Many are married or have a widowed mother, and in such cases the State allows the wife or mother the magnificent sum of 1 fr. 60 (about threepence) a day for her support. A shocking case has recently come under my notice in the commune where I live. A young married man, who was earning good wages, was taken for his military service last May. His wife, who is about twenty, has a baby ten months old and is expecting another next March. She was before her marriage a domestic servant, and is trying to exist by housework jobs, but, as her state of health is such that she is almost unable to work, she cannot now do more than two hours a day, for which she earns a shilling, so that her total income is 1s. 3d. a day. The young man's father was killed in the war, and his wife's father, who lives in a Breton village, is in extreme poverty, and has two large families, having married twice. The young man will not be released until next November for, although the conscripts called up this month will serve for only a year, those already under the Colours must serve for eighteen months. I do not pretend that this is a typical case. Fortunately, it is exceptional, but it is only a question of degree. The hardship is universal except in the case of the very small minority of conscripts whose families can easily afford to give them an allowance during their period of service and to whom an additional year without earning is of no importance.

In these circumstances, it would be quite easy for the Socialist Party, for example, to organize a strong movement for the abolition of conscription, and it would gain great popularity by taking such an initiative. Unfortunately, the Socialists are the strongest advocates of conscription for reasons that have little relation to reality. These reasons are: (1) that Jaurès advocated the "Nation armée"; (2) that universal military service is "democratic" and

"égalitaire"; (3) that a professional army would be a "pretorian" force that would be used against the workmen.

These reasons seem to me very unconvincing. I would reply to the first that, even on the apparent assumption that Jaurès was infallible, the fact that Germany no longer has conscription has changed the situation, and it is by no means certain that, had he lived to see this change, he would have remained of the same opinion. Evidently France could not abandon conscription so long as it existed in Germany, and the aim of Jaurès was to reduce its evils to a minimum.

To the second argument one might reply that it would be equally "democratic" and "égalitaire" to make cancer or tuberculosis compulsory and universal. This argument is in fact just cant. The real reason why Governments like conscript armies is that they are cheap and numerous. Nothing is less calculated to promote a democratic spirit than military discipline. Two and a half years in Germany have convinced me that the most important factor in the remarkable change that has taken place in the spirit of the German people is the abolition of conscription—more important than the abolition of the monarchy. It is this that has made the Germans a free people. In particular the younger generation in Germany, who have never been drilled or imprisoned in barracks, are remarkable for their independence of character, whereas the French seem to be becoming more and more docile.

The third argument has perhaps more in it than the others, or would have but for the fact that France has already a "pretorian" professional army fully adequate to repress even a serious rising. M. Poincaré has proposed an increase in it next year for the express purpose of avoiding the use of the conscript army for internal police purposes. In fact the conscript army has never been used for such purposes since the 17th Regiment mutinied about twenty years ago when ordered to fire on the revolting wine-growers in the South of France.

The great increase in the French professional army has not perhaps been fully realized in England, where the assertions of M. Briand and M. Paul-Boncour that France has greatly reduced the strength of her peace-time army have been too readily accepted. In fact, as M. Montigny pointed out at the Angers Congress, the French peace-time army is larger than in 1913. M. Briand and M. Paul-Boncour naturally chose 1914 for comparison, but, as M. Montigny also pointed out, the Three-year Law was in fact a partial mobilization, and the conditions in 1914 were not normal. The provision of that law retaining under the Colours the conscripts whose period of two years had expired was the mobilization by an oblique method of one class of reservists.

In 1913 the total strength of the French active army was 582,900, of whom 96,990 were professionals in various categories—professional officers, Republican Guard, gendarmerie, &c. Next year the total strength of the active army will be 601,024, including 255,458 professionals, and, when the service of one year is completely in force, the total strength will be 637,968, including 400,176 professionals. Moreover, the two latter totals do not include the forces outside the Mediterranean basin, whereas the total of 1913 included them. Further, clerical work hitherto done by officers or soldiers will in future be done by 80,000 civilian employees, who will release the same number of men for purely military duties. Thus the increase since 1913 is even larger than appears from the figures.

Clearly, we are up against a difficult proposition, but there is nothing for it but to go on demanding the limitation of reserves, which means in fact the universal abolition of

conscription, and the reduction of peace-time armies as well. We shall be strongly supported by Germany and, no doubt, by certain other countries. M. Montigny is not the only Frenchman already convinced that France has a far larger peace-time army than she needs in present circumstances for defensive purposes, and we need not despair of ultimately influencing French opinion if we are not afraid to speak plainly. The more we ask the more we shall ultimately get, and it would be the wise as well as the loyal policy to propose the application to all countries, beginning with our own, of the disarmament conditions imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles.

There are two considerations that may carry weight with the French. One is that Germany will not remain permanently disarmed in an armed world. The other is that conscription makes it much more easy for a Government to go to war, because it can by a mobilization order silence nearly the whole adult male population. In 1914 the British Government was the only one obliged seriously to take public opinion into account. The idea that universal military service makes a nation pacific, and is therefore a factor in preventing war, used to be prevalent in France, but the majority of Frenchmen, I think, have been taught by 1914 that it is a delusion.

ROBERT DELL.

P.S.—Since this article was written, M. Painlevé has contested the accuracy of M. Montigny's figures, which I have quoted. M. Montigny, I understand, maintains their accuracy, but I have not had time to make any independent investigation. In any case, the only important difference between M. Montigny and M. Painlevé concerns the strength of the active army in 1913 which, according to M. Painlevé, was 753,000. M. Painlevé says that the strength of the active army (excluding the troops outside the Mediterranean basin), when the new law has had its full effect, will be 598,000 in round figures, whereas M. Montigny estimated it at 637,968. It is, of course, to some extent a question of estimation, as the number of conscripts, for instance, cannot be exactly foretold. The total, including the troops outside the Mediterranean basin, will, according to M. Painlevé, be 654,832. Assuming the accuracy of M. Painlevé's figures, and assuming therefore that this total is smaller by about 98,000 than in 1913, the fact remains that it is very excessive in present conditions, especially seeing that the German active army and "Green Police" together number only 200,000. The total French military and naval expenditure next year will be 11,260,000,000 francs (£90,080,000), that is to say, about half the national expenditure other than the service of the debt. In 1913 it was about 30 per cent. of the national expenditure other than the service of the debt.—R. D.

## EDUCATION IN THE WAR

ONE aspect of the Great War seems to have been ignored by everybody. Almost no one has troubled to record the part which it played in the life of the average public schoolboy at school between 1914 and 1918. The Great War then obsessed everybody's mind to the exclusion of all other topics, and it altogether vitiated the outlook of the average schoolboy. The effects of this long obsession seem still to be important for two reasons. In the first place, the intensive kind of war propaganda to which public schoolboys were then exposed has not, even yet, altogether ceased, and, in the second place, the outlook and opinions on warfare of the average young man of to-day are to a large extent determined by his memories of the Great War.



Intensive war propaganda in English schools had begun before August, 1914. Lord Roberts and the *DAILY MAIL* had aroused the suppressed militarist ambitions of most underpaid schoolmasters long before 1914. Even before I was twelve, I had learned from masters at school to despise Little Englanders and to hate Lord Haldane. About that period almost every preparatory schoolboy seems to have been in constant communication with Lord Roberts's supporters. When I was at school his stirring messages reached me and the other boys by post at breakfast in the morning; by night time they had found their way into my Bible. I was then also an involuntary member of the Navy League. From its Presidents and Vice-Presidents I received, two or three times a term, lives of the British Admirals and pictures of "The Death of Nelson" and "The Last of the 'Revenge'." There was no reason why preparatory schoolboys should resent this type of propaganda. Instead of resisting it they were only too proud to be flattered by it into warlike dreams, dreams in which they were gallant heroes defending the Union Jack. Such dreams early pervert the viewpoint from which history should be approached. During my schooldays it did not occur to me that Britain might ever have been engaged in an unjust war, or that anyone fighting for the Union Jack could play less than an heroic part.

By 1914 to train young boys to take part in warfare had already become a recognized function of the English Public School. In the smaller public schools the business of the Officers' Training Corps was very popular. The glamour of uniforms appealed to masters, many of whom took to Corps work more readily and more seriously than to school work; consequently camp before the war was regarded as a jolly fashionable pastime from which no boy cared to have been absent. After 1914, however, in most middle-class English public schools war became the *whole* business of school life. Masters forced to appear unmanly by remaining at home to teach, at once began to model themselves upon the discipline and appearance of regular soldiers. There was a fashion among them for growing military moustaches. Recruit drills, uniforms, parades, and musketry became features of the school curriculum more than equal in importance to work and games. The average schoolboy was glad to follow the example of his masters, and to allow himself to become completely preoccupied with the Great War.

The average middle-class schoolboy is dense, insensitive, and credulous to a degree unsuspected by his superiors. His home life is usually such as to encourage him to imbibe the atmosphere of almost any society without questioning, and, moreover, in the smaller English public schools, school organization is to a large extent based upon the discouragement of originality of thought and action. Therefore there were few misgivings about this long game of playing at being soldiers instead of at schoolboys. Occasional grumblings at its monotony were to be heard; but the game was rarely, almost never, criticized on account of the wrongness of its fundamental outlook. At most, a sick boy, alone on a walk, would try to work out what England could have been like before this endless war began, and to wonder what school was like when there were no war maps in the class rooms, when no old boys and no relations came home on leave, and when there were no death rolls on the walls of the Cloisters—around which prefects could congregate and chatter on an equality with masters. But the riddle was a hopeless one. Without more leisure than it was considered safe to grant to a middle-class schoolboy it can rarely have been solved.

It is true that the Corps was supposed, even then, to be a voluntary institution; but no new boy was ever per-

mitted to be aware of this. Not even the sons of prominent pacifists, in a school of liberal traditions, such as I was at, could escape its disciplinary clutches. Half-holidays and recreation times were given over to Corps work. On weekdays school prayers automatically included the recitation of death rolls, and on Sundays the chapel organ resounded with the Last Post and the Dead March in Saul, and Army Chaplains and Bishops came to preach glib sermons about the glorious deeds of the men doing their duty by fighting, and by struggling along in the trenches. Drilled and rationed, living from day to day according to a standard of duty towards God, King, and Country, a schoolboy could find no quarter in this mongrel atmosphere of real and model warfare. Either he succumbed to it altogether; or, in rare instances, he reacted against it, violently, to the loss of his own personal prestige among other boys and among masters.

To boys at public schools about this time disillusionment came with the end of the Great War itself. The Armistice brought with it a violent change of values which for the public schoolboy meant a revolutionary change in his personal affairs. Everything appertaining to the war had abruptly become irrelevant, not only had its glamour disappeared, but its pertinence also. Suddenly the problem of playing a part in real life had to be faced for the first time. The Great War which had previously seemed so real, controlling every ambition and action, had in a day become a shadow in the background, dark and distant, chaotic and wasteful, memorable only for hours spent formulating dreams now never likely to be realized. The Armistice compelled schoolboys to abandon the delights of comparing the merits of buff cavalry breeches and shining spurs with the modest blue-grey uniform of the Royal Air Force. The average boy had then to change his romantic dreams for the new hard fact of choosing a peaceful career. At that time many young men between sixteen and twenty suddenly realized that they had been saddled with a war education for life instead of for death. The readjustment demanded was difficult and full of responsibility—by no means everybody overcame the difficulties. There is no record of those who failed to make the necessary effort—they are among the unknown war casualties.

To one who has had to run the whole gamut of these experiences it is not surprising that there are complaints that the views held by modern youth on warfare are incoherent. The personal effort imposed upon those at school during the war to readjust themselves to peace-time conditions was tremendous. It has made many young men and young women very reluctant to recall the details of their war-time experiences. Modern youth seems to have thrown off particular memories of the Great War as a man throws off the memories which haunt him in the shape of a bad conscience. He has forced himself to accept the broad generalization that war is futile and horrible; because this belief has been a convenience to him and an aid to his readjustment to peaceful environment. But to go deeper into the question is more than his vanity will bear, and probably more than he could do without becoming active as an anti-social, anti-war propagandist. If he were to examine systematically one by one the beliefs which he held at school the process would involve much painful and apparently unnecessary self-criticism. Therefore, while there seems to be no danger of war in the immediate future, the modern young man remains inarticulate about the ethics of warfare. But the lure of another war still remains powerfully attractive in the background. It is probable that if it came he could not resist it; his education has deprived him of the power to think rationally about warfare.

R. G. RANDALL.



## LIFE AND POLITICS

THE popular estimate of Mr. Neville Chamberlain as a Minister rather arrogant and aloof, and given to riding over opposition, is probably as accurate as most popular estimates of leading politicians. Statesmen, like poets, have one personality with which they face the world—often created for them out of rumour and party prejudice—and another for those who love them. There has been much rather silly talk about the difficulties of the Government over the derating scheme being increased by the accident that it is Mr. Chamberlain's job to steer it through the House of Commons. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chamberlain has already shown very clearly his anxious desire to conciliate criticism. The Bill was announced early, doubtless with the purpose of giving time for suggestions to be made and ideas to come out which could be worked into the structure before the scheme took definite shape. Even before the Minister made his masterly introductory speech, some very important changes had been made. The alarmed local authorities had received the (insufficiently) soothing assurance "You shall not lose"; the abolition of the Guardians had been softened down by an arrangement for the continuance of expert service—and so on. As part of the same policy of conciliation the concession of liberty to back-bench critics was made, doubtless at Mr. Chamberlain's instigation. His Bill is very much a Bill in the making, and one must give him the credit for his sincere efforts to wangle his unwieldy mixture of good and bad into law as a more or less agreed measure.

Mr. Chamberlain's reasonable and conciliatory advocacy on Monday undoubtedly raised the spirits of his party for the moment. The Tories felt after the speech that there is more to be said for this ambitious remodelling of local government and rating than they had feared; they began to hope that there is a rather better prospect of dressing the election window attractively with the more saleable parts of the Bill. It remains, however, as Mr. Brown amusingly described it in his story, "a mixed infant," whose destination is doubtful. Liberal opinion, while frankly admitting the many good points, tends to stress the danger of the overriding of local needs and experience, especially in the country districts, by a reinforced officialism as the result of the Poor Law changes. Generally it is thought that the extraordinarily large and undefined powers which Mr. Chamberlain's Ministry is taking to itself is a move away from democratic local government. And there is fairly general scepticism about the effectiveness of the derating proposals considered as a sop to the depressed areas. It remains true that the Tories think of Protection as the only thorough and satisfactory method of subsidy, and while, when the time comes, they will talk the orthodox stuff about the Bill, they will pin their faith to Protection, thinly camouflaged as Safeguarding.

It has not been usual for Liberals to take the National Union of Manufacturers very seriously. That body has been regarded chiefly as a group of Die-hard all-round Protectionists, without much serious influence on politics. This estimate must be revised. At the meeting of the Union some days since, Mr. Terrell, the arch-Protectionist, was able triumphantly to announce that Mr. Baldwin has conceded everything, or nearly everything, for which he has been "crying in the wilderness"—as Mr. Asquith once put it—so long. The new Safeguarding rules apparently have been taken almost unaltered from the Union's demands. There is one slight concession still to be got from the all too willing Mr. Baldwin. Industries that want a tariff must not be subjected to the "harassing" condition that they

are efficiently conducted. When that trifling barrier to the subsidizing of incompetence has been removed, all will be well. Mr. Terrell's society, at its annual meeting, let the cat completely out of the bag, and it purred with satisfaction as it emerged. If there is anyone left who finds consolation in a supposed difference between Safeguarding in its promised extension and Protection, he is singularly clever at distinctions and at self-deception. There was amusingly childish cunning in the speeches at this meeting. The leaders were immensely pleased at having got all they want out of the Government, but they think it would be wiser to adopt a little discreet camouflage on Tory platforms. They know very well that Safeguarding is Protection, and Protection is Safeguarding, but the electors must be lulled in the delusion that Tweedledum is quite another fellow than Tweedledee. It is a pretty little conspiracy.

\* \* \*

Here is a remarkable chain of historical sequence, whose links are supplied, in the most curious manner, by the career of the late Lajpat Rai. In 1818 one James Silk Buckingham founded the CALCUTTA JOURNAL, an energetic and successful newspaper. In the same year the Bengal Government made an executive decree, known as Regulation III., which gave power, roughly, to the Governor-General to deport any person whose looks or behaviour he did not like. Five years later it was applied to the editor of the CALCUTTA JOURNAL, because of the vigour of his attacks upon the Government. Result, Buckingham came home and founded THE ATHENÆUM. Eighty years later there was trouble in Upper India. It was the Jubilee of the Mutiny. John Morley was at the India Office. The Punjab Government asked for stern measures, and the Viceroy's advisers bethought them of Regulation III. "But," said Morley, "you would not surely bring out 'the rusty sword of 1818'?" "Certainly," replied Lord Minto in effect, "it is an excellent weapon." By its use Lajpat Rai was deported to Burma. He was a man of unblemished character, with many powerful friends in Parliament. For many months they harassed John Morley in the House of Commons, so that finally he fled to the refuge of the Lords—a most unexpected result of the use of the "rusty sword," then nearly a century old. In the Punjab an embittered Lajpat Rai joined the extremists, and after another twenty years, led a crowd in Lahore against Sir John Simon and his colleagues, was, his friends assert, battered by the police, died, and now receives this brief tribute (for he was a good, simple, and brave man) in the columns of the paper which was indirectly brought into being by Regulation III. Bengal, without which Lajpat Rai would not have become an Indian leader, or John Morley a Peer of the Realm.

\* \* \*

In the early morning of November 21st, 1918, I was standing, cold and unhappy after a sleepless night, on the captain's bridge of a battleship, somewhere off the North-East Coast of Scotland. It was, as a matter of fact, one of the great moments of history, though while it happened one was chiefly conscious, such is the weakness of the flesh, of the discomfort and an unpleasantly strained attention. The German fleet was about to surrender. We were all painfully peering into the mist that shut out everything beyond the radius of a few miles, even our companion British ships. All I actually saw of the surrendering fleet was a few extremely dim, dark shapes, a procession of shadows, far away in the haze. The scale of the stupendous spectacle was too great for detail to be appreciated. In silence, shadow, and a general atmosphere of humiliation, the German ships came along and were taken into custody. "Humiliation," I say, and not only in the German fleet.

There was no indecent jubilation aboard our battleship. As I talked with high officers, I realized that while they were, of course, pleased enough, their hearts were full of a strong and surely noble sympathy for the humiliated German sailors: it seemed to them—or for the sensitive among them—a thing for sorrow and not for gladness that the magnificent fleet, whose courage and skill they so well knew, should be sneaking into custody without a shot fired. The comradeship of the sea came to the surface at that supreme moment of war history; and I, an ignorant landsman, never admired our sailors more than when I stood, silent and brooding as they, among them and watched that march of broken greatness into prison.

\* \* \*

Lord Birkenhead has got decidedly the worst of it as the result of his intemperate onslaught upon Sir Henry Slessor. It is clear that there is much sympathy in the profession with the victim. The Attorney-General's defence of his noble friend in the House of Commons was significantly vague—Lord Birkenhead calls it "incredibly inept"—it was the kind of defence that makes the person defended feel slightly uncomfortable. Apart from the merits of this dispute, people are getting tired and resentful of these ungoverned outbursts of contempt with which Lord Birkenhead delights to "savage" his critics. It is not civilized behaviour; one might say, without being far wrong, that it is caddish, for Lord Birkenhead usually chooses his victims among those whom he is pleased to regard as his inferiors in achievement or professional status. In this case he will convince few people that it is right for him to become a well-paid company director and journalist while continuing for a time to draw a pension which by usage, if not by specific regulation, is earned by judicial work. Lord Birkenhead has committed political suicide for the sake of beginning a new life with more "glittering prizes": it behoves him to cultivate a little more modesty, and not to invite reprisals by these swashbuckling raids upon the reputations of people he happens to dislike. Such conduct will not for long postpone the inevitable tendency of the public to turn to other objects of interest. A decent and, one may hope, opulent obscurity seems to be his self-chosen fate. [Since writing this, I see that Lord Birkenhead is considering handing over his pension to hospitals. He merely retains his pension to preserve the rights of Lord Chancellors. It's an ill wind, &c.]

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I gather that the decision in the Football Coupon case has relieved the newspapers that indulge in this form of circulation inflation of an embarrassment. They have dropped their competitions promptly, and are not taking the risk of winning on an appeal. Football guessing competitions had become a burdensome nuisance, for the necessity of going one better than rivals had forced the sums offered in prizes up to an uneconomic level. The decision will be welcomed by journalists as doing something to cleanse newspapers of one of the evils that have followed from modern devices to obtain what papers that do not indulge in football competitions describe as Waste-Paper Circulations. There are, however, signs already of the substitution of other competitions, which, if they are cheaper, are hardly less objectionable to those who would like to see the newspapers sticking to the business of selling news and opinions. I noted in a Sunday journal this week a new offer of large sums for the most beautiful smile on the face of a typist, or some such "latest spray from the fountain of folly." I hope, by the way, that my readers did not miss Mr. Justice Avory's delicious comparison in the SHEFFIELD TELEGRAPH case of a coupon-hawking paper to a greengrocer who would make a betting business not a betting business by "making it a condition that he will

not make a bet with anyone unless he or she buys a carrot." "A carrot"!

\* \* \*

I have been to see the model of the Sacristy which the Dean and Chapter of Westminster propose to erect close to the north transept door of the Abbey, and between St. Margaret's and the wall of the choir. The intention is to try it on the dog, as it were, and frankly one dog is moved to bark. It may be conceded that the Abbey clergy must have a Sacristy in which to put on their vestments and so on, but there is no need, that I can see, why it should be a sham antique placed where it conceals genuine mediæval building. The thing is in "Ye olde" style of architecture, and, to my mind, it is an offence to place it in the neighbourhood of great work. Large sums have been gladly given by the public to preserve the Abbey, but this is not preservation, it is desecration, however small and cleverly camouflaged the competing sham may be. A modern building so placed cannot possibly be in harmony with the mediæval craftsmanship around it, and I heartily support the protest which the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings is making. Let the Dean and Chapter take down their theatrical "property," and abandon the scheme of building it as a permanent monument to the general lack of taste.

KAPPA.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### DISARMAMENT

SIR,—General Sir Frederick Maurice's letter in your issue of the 10th inst. was so largely technical that I deferred answering it in the hope that it would be dealt with by one of your military correspondents. As no reply appears in your issue of the 17th, I should like to ask Sir Frederick through you to reconcile his figures with those submitted by M. Montigny to the Congress at Angers early this month, at which a resolution against the increase of French military and naval armaments was passed unanimously. It was reported that in 1913 French military and naval expenditure was 1,598 million francs (gold); to-day it is 2,274 million francs (gold). In 1913 the effectives (officers and men) were 558,000; next year they will be 601,024; in 1930 they will be 637,768. In 1913 the number of professionals (standing army) was 96,990; this year, 255,458; in 1930 it will rise to 400,176—and this while German military power has been practically destroyed.

My statement: "It is said that including reserves the ex-Allies on the Continent could put into the field eight to ten millions of trained men," was a summary of what has appeared in the sayings of various public men recently. It is now ten years since the Armistice. With such huge numbers passing into the Reserves annually it seems to me that the ex-Allies on the Continent must now have available even more than eight to ten millions of trained men.

I do not think we need worry about "the not inconsiderable party in France which is opposed to the reductions (!) now being carried out," of which Sir Frederick Maurice speaks. Those who are in touch with France and the French people know that the Paris Press is very far from representing the French nation just now.—Yours, &c.,

D. M. STEVENSON.

Glasgow.

November 21st, 1928.

### "THE HEATHER ON FIRE"

SIR,—May I add something to the excellent article under this title by Mr. Henderson Stewart? Lord Salisbury once complained of the "Celtic fringes," and showed how, if it was not for Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, England might enjoy a perpetuity of Tory Governments under the rule of the sleepy south and the most provincial of all cities, London.



Fresh vigour has again and again come to the Liberal Party from the extremities, and a Scotsman, Campbell-Bannerman, led the party to one of its most overwhelming victories.

It is necessary, therefore, for English Liberals to study very closely the attitude of Scotland to the Scottish Local Government Bill, as by fighting the Scottish measure they may lead a flank attack which may turn the whole position of the enemy and compel a retreat. In the first place, it is necessary to grasp the fact that the Scottish Bill is very different to the English Bill as it proposes not only to abolish the Parish Councils, but also the Educational Authorities, and to attack the privileges and powers of the Royal Burghs of Scotland.

We Scottish people live very largely in the past, and the tragic yet heroic story of our rugged little country is very dear to us, and closely interwoven with that story are the histories of our Royal Burghs, many of them possessing very ancient charters and specially protected from interference by England in the Act of Union.

The attack on their privileges has turned life-long Tories into bitter opponents of the Government, and no Conservative seat in Scotland should be regarded as safe in the next election.

Moreover, the County Councils in Scotland are notoriously Conservative in politics, and run by estate factors and landlords, while they are of so recent a creation as to have no public sentiment behind them. The wiser policy would have been to enlarge the areas of the Royal Burghs.

It is at this psychological moment that a Nationalist Party has arisen in Scotland, which is full of vigour and enthusiasm, and is appealing to the imagination of young Scotland, more especially in the Universities. Already it is of enough importance to have roused the vigorous opposition of the Conservative Press.

The Scottish Liberal Federation published a complete scheme for a Scottish Parliament in 1924, affirming earlier resolutions, and therefore we Liberals should welcome the Nationalist movement in Scotland and support that grand old Scotsman Sir Henry Keith in his fight for the Royal Burghs.

To win Scotland, it is essential that the whole weight of the Liberal Party be behind the defence of our ancient privileges. This Government has no remit from Scotland. No attempt has been made to consult Scottish opinion, and we ask the Liberal Party for their generous support in fighting the unfortunate measure brought in by this Government.—Yours, &c.,

A. P. LAURIE.

### DISTURBANCES IN AUSTRALIA

SIR,—I regret that British opinion, as reflected in the columns of your issue of September 15th, ranks trouble with the aborigines in Central Australia with the waterside strike as a major disturbance in the Commonwealth. Your paragraph may have given rise to much misapprehension, which I trust other Australians besides myself will hasten to correct. Some apprehension was caused by the desperation of a small tribe of Central Australian natives, who, finding their normal food supplies of game reduced by drought, began onslaughts upon settlers' cattle, and in two isolated instances attacked settlers to obtain food, killing one hapless prospector who was travelling alone, and wounding two station hands.

Certainly this indicates a serious state of affairs, but to say that "the settlers are arming and the natives are assembling in their savage conclaves," conveys an alarming impression which grossly overstates the position. Nor are "several communities threatened by the tribes of black aborigines by whom they are surrounded," and it is also wrong to place the trouble in "the territory which lies west of the sand wastes that separate the mountain ranges of Central Australia from Western Queensland." "Sand wastes" is a misnomer for pastoral country, which, in good seasons, is well-grassed, if undeveloped because of a lack of transport and other facilities. The statement that "a situation has arisen which is reminiscent of the *mises en scène* of the popular novels of the eighties" is another gross exaggeration, probably resulting from wildly romantic

accounts of cable correspondents who are unacquainted with Central Australian life. I have visited this particular country, and know from my own experience, and from conversations with the settlers, that the native tribes have been greatly reduced in numbers, and that one may travel through this territory for days without seeing any aborigines or noticing any signs of their existence. The prospect of Australia quelling insurgent lumpers on the waterfront and repelling hordes of savages in the interior, as represented in your paragraph, is an unwarranted libel.—Yours, &c.,

T. C. BRAY.

Adelaide, South Australia.

### OLIVER GOLDSMITH

SIR,—With your permission I should like to make a few remarks on the brilliant article by Mr. Augustine Birrell on Oliver Goldsmith.

It is an article that no admirer of Goldsmith, and certainly no Irishman, can take exception to. As Mr. Birrell says, "Goldsmith was by birth and early breeding an Irishman of the very kind Englishmen have taken it into their heads to be typical of the whole race of the sons of Erin."

It is true that Goldsmith is generally regarded as a typical Irishman, but though he *was* thoroughly Irish, he was, in my opinion, *more* cosmopolitan than Irish, and this indeed Mr. Birrell implies further on in his article.

Goldsmith was indeed a "Citizen of the World," whereas Dr. Johnson was thoroughly and typically English. Possibly in this respect he was greater than Johnson. As Mr. Birrell says again, "Goldsmith at his best was a thinker without prejudices, national or local. Johnson was a mountain-range of prejudices. As a political thinker Goldsmith was a good European, not to say a cosmopolitan."

I believe that Mr. Birrell is also correct in saying that the greatness of Goldsmith does not appear so much in his Comedies or in his Poems, or even in the "Vicar of Wakefield," as in his essays and miscellaneous writings.

"It seems therefore," says Mr. Birrell, "that if Johnson's deliberate judgment (*viz.*, that Goldsmith was 'a very great man') is to be supported, it must depend upon the fact well known to Johnson, who after his fashion had read whatever was written in his time in London, that Goldsmith in his essays and miscellaneous writings (other than his Histories, Civil and National) had frequently exhibited an originality of reflection and a downright power of thought beyond the tether of Johnson himself."

Mr. Birrell also rightly draws attention to the large amount of inspiration which Goldsmith derived from the French literature, but there is one other source of his poetic and literary inspiration which is generally quite unrecognized and forgotten, namely, the inspiration which he derived from the ancient Gaelic literature of Ireland.

This remark applies to many others of the best Anglo-Irish writers, statesmen, poets, and orators, and particularly to Edmund Burke, but it would occupy too much of your space and my time to enter into.

Suffice it to say that Goldsmith's first teacher was a certain Thomas, or, as he was more commonly called, "Paddy" Byrne, an old soldier turned village schoolmaster (celebrated in the "Deserted Village").

"But Paddy Byrne had other accomplishments which must certainly have better pleased his pupil," says Mr. Hugh A. Law in "Anglo-Irish Literature." "He was the unfailing fount of country ballads, of fairy stories and old tales; loved to recount his own adventures and those of famous 'rapparees,' and to turn the poems of Virgil into Irish verse." To this village schoolmaster, perhaps, rather than to any of his later teachers, did Goldsmith owe his early love of poetry. Another influence tending in the same direction was doubtless his acquaintance with Carolan, of whom he has left a description in one of his essays. The "Last of the Bards" was at this time a frequent visitor at the house of Charles O'Connor, a friend of Oliver's "good uncle," the Rev. Thomas Contarine.

"I think," Carolan said once, "that when I am among the O'Conors the harp has the old sound in it."

Brought up as he was, it seems hardly possible that Goldsmith can have been ignorant of the Irish Gaelic tongue,



then the common speech of his countryside. He seems often to have sung Irish songs and retained always a passionate love of Irish music.—Yours, &c.,

C. A. MAGINN.

Sunnyside, Liverpool Road,  
Great Sankey, Warrington.

### THE CENOTAPH CEREMONY

SIR,—Your correspondent "Kappa," who seems to have been made "slightly sick" by the Armistice Day ceremony at the Cenotaph, remarks that the spirit informing the ceremony was "a proud and defiant patriotism."

I am fairly robust, and so was not attacked by symptoms of nausea on reading this astonishing comment. I will merely say, as another spectator of the scene, that it would be difficult to invent a description more utterly remote from the truth. Any person, slightly sick or quite well, who thought he observed in that ceremony a spirit of proud and defiant patriotism would be capable of detecting the seeds of Jingoism in a Quakers' meeting.

Incidentally, it seems to me a queer manifestation of the peace spirit that the rare spectacle of a soldier bowing his head in silence for two minutes in memory of the end of a gruesome war should infuriate some very peaceful citizens and cause others to vomit.—Yours, &c.,

ARTHUR J. CUMMINGS.

11, St. Mary's Avenue, Finchley, N.3.  
November 20th, 1928.

["Kappa" writes: "Mr. Cummings misquotes. If he will glance again at the paragraph he criticizes he will see that I did not say that the Armistice Day ceremony made me 'slightly sick.' I said that that was the effect upon me of 'the usual gush of hackneyed and obviously pumped-up sentiment' concerning the anniversary in the newspapers before and after the event. I *did* express the opinion that the ceremony, with its military display and procession of 'patriotic' societies—the reference was specially to the Fascist women—was informed with 'a spirit of proud and defiant patriotism.' This description I am prepared to defend. Mr. Cummings apparently thought the ceremony more resembled a Quakers' meeting. The two impressions cannot be reconciled. Finally, my second paragraph on this subject was specifically intended to save me from the kind of attack Mr. Cummings makes in his last sentence. If he will read it also again, he may admit that it is grossly unfair to accuse me of being disgusted by the 'rare spectacle of a soldier bowing his head,' &c. I wrote that paragraph for the sole purpose of expressing my deep sympathy with the ceremony in its aspect as a mourning for the dead."]

### THE LAST OF THE DOSTOEVSKYS

SIR,—Many of your readers may be interested to learn some rather sad facts concerning the only surviving direct descendant of Fedor Dostoevsky. André Dostoevsky, a grandson of the great writer, after losing both his father and his brother (whose deaths were due to privations resulting from present conditions in Russia), is now himself in a precarious state of health owing to similar privations. Under-nourishment and over-work at the University of Novotcherkask, in South Russia, where he is now studying, brought on a serious nervous breakdown from which he is only just recovering. In order to be dependent for as short a time as possible upon his mother (who is obliged to earn her own living as well as support her son), the boy, now aged eighteen, is making a great effort to pass the necessary examinations in three years instead of four. Hampered by ill-health and lack of money, the struggle is a hard one. If, therefore, anything can be done to prevent a repetition of the tragedy which befell his father and brother, and which is now threatening Dostoevsky's only surviving grandson, surely it is worth attempting. Money, of course, is what is chiefly needed in order to enable the boy, who is doing brilliantly at the University, to complete his studies and obtain the degree upon which his future career will largely depend.

Any reader of THE NATION who would care to have further information on the subject is invited to communicate with the writer of this letter, who is authorized to transmit

any offers of help to the only representative of the family now resident in France.—Yours, &c.,

ROLLO H. MYERS.

6, Avenue Sully-Prudhomme, Paris (7e.).

### BACON AND SHAKESPEARE

SIR,—Your reviewer, in discussing Mr. Lytton Strachey's new book, says that Bacon was one of the greatest cads in history. He goes on to say: "and yet there are those who believe he wrote the works of Shakespeare."

Two days before I listened to a gentleman (a keen supporter of the Shakespeare authorship) reading a paper on "Hamlet," in the course of which he said that Hamlet was "an unmitigated cad"!

Now unquestionably the creator of Hamlet admired him, for he pictures him as universally beloved.

The coincidence seems to me to open up an interesting field of speculation.—Yours, &c.,

GERALD C. MABERLY.

Saffron Walden.

November 25th, 1928.

### A LATE ARRIVAL

IN the month of July, 1831, there was a considerable stir in the village of New Salem, Illinois. A stranger had arrived there. He had come to take charge of the big new store which Denton Offutt was just about to open; and in New Salem the arrival of any stranger was an important event. For though it was the centre of a large district, New Salem was not a large place. It consisted of fifteen or sixteen log huts, and two or three stores and a mill. Its whole population numbered about a hundred. But even if New Salem had been larger than it was, the arrival of this stranger would not probably have escaped notice. For he was a man of very remarkable appearance. He stood six feet four inches high, with absurdly long arms and legs, and huge hands and feet. His face was thin and shrivelled with a curious melancholy expression, and he had a high thin voice. His dress also was remarkable. He wore a blue cotton round-about coat, stoga shoes, and pale blue casinet pantaloons which failed to connect with either coat or socks, coming, so we are told, "about three inches below the coat and an inch or two above the socks." (It was one of Lincoln's minor misfortunes that he could seldom find pantaloons large enough to fit him. Even quite late in his career his short trousers added a touch of comedy to his appearance.) On his head at this time was a large straw hat, to be replaced soon afterwards by the great stove-pipe hat, in which, when he was postmaster of New Salem, he used to carry the mail. But under this singular appearance, the stranger was found to possess some admirable qualities. He was enormously strong—"the strongest man New Salem had ever known"—he could lift great weights, and could jump, run, box, and wrestle, better than any man in the district. He had also "a most astonishing memory," and could tell any number of good stories, so that the boys would cluster round him to hear him talk. "There was no man so sour that Lincoln could not make him laugh." He loved to recite doggerel verse and jingles which he had heard or invented, and would sing absurd songs about

or :—

"Oald, oald Suckey Blueskin";

"Hail Columbia, happy land,

or :—

If you ain't broke, may I be damned";

"The turbaned Turk that scorns the world,  
and struts about with his whiskers curled."

More than thirty years later, when Lincoln had become President, his friends would still recall the songs of that strange new Sion. He was, they said, "the best fun-maker they had ever met."

Of his boyhood he hardly ever spoke. "It is a great folly," he once exclaimed in the days of his eminence, "to attempt to make anything out of me and my early life." It could all be summed up, he said, in the familiar verse: "the short and simple annals of the poor." But it was inevitable that the attempt should be made, and in this admirable new biography by Senator Beveridge,\* in which every scrap of evidence about Lincoln up to the date of his election as President has been collected and sifted, the rough life in the backwoods of Kentucky and Illinois, in which he spent his first twenty-two years, is vividly described. He was born at a place called the Sinking Spring in Kentucky, in a rough log cabin with an earthen floor. His parents were settlers, "the most humble and obscure in this humble class of people." His father was a carpenter, who despised education and could only write his name with difficulty. His mother could not even do that, but made her mark. She went by the name of Nancy Hanks, but her origin was obscure. She was said to be the natural daughter of a rich Virginian planter, the owner, no doubt, of many slaves; and as the boy grew up his mind would turn to this unknown grandfather from whom he derived as he thought some of his extraordinary powers. "Rightly or wrongly," says Lord Charnwood,† "he attributed the best that he had inherited to a licentious connection and a nameless progenitor." Was it from this source also that he derived another characteristic of his youth, his dislike of honest work? For Lincoln as a boy was deplorably lazy. On that point all the authorities are agreed. "He was no hand to pitch in at work," said old Mrs. Josiah Crawford, "but would take it as calmly and pleasant as his manner was." And a neighbour, John Romine, for whom Lincoln once worked was even more emphatic:—

"He was always reading and thinking. I used to get mad at him. . . . I saw Abe was awful lazy. He would laugh and talk and crack jokes and tell stories all the time. He didn't love work, but did dearly love his pay."

He also dearly loved his reading, but his reading in those days could not have come to very much. For books in the log-huts of Illinois were few and not easily obtained. There were the "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Robinson Crusoe," "Sinbad the Sailor," and "Æsop's Fables." What a strange education for the future statesman. There were also an old Life of Washington, and the Bible. But Lincoln never greatly cared for biography. Biographies, he used to say, are all false; "the author makes a wonderful hero of his subject, he magnifies his perfections and suppresses his imperfections." As for the Bible, it was doubtful how much he believed it. "When I first knew Mr. Lincoln," wrote his friend Speed, who knew him perhaps as well as anyone, "he was sceptical as to the great truths of the Christian Religion." Probably he remained sceptical to the end. He never joined any Church or took much interest in the subject. It was perhaps the only subject on which he was habitually silent.

Altogether his development was extraordinarily slow. Never has a hero "arrived" so late. At the age of twenty-three Milton was already an accomplished poet, engaged in the composition of a charming sonnet lamenting the lateness of his spring. At twenty-three Napoleon was a Captain in the Revolutionary Army, and in his passion for knowledge had "ransacked the records of the ancient and modern world." At twenty-three Pitt was Prime Minister. At twenty-three Gladstone—one of Lincoln's contemporaries—was already Member for Newark and the rising hope of his Party. At twenty-three Lincoln was an

unknown storekeeper, uneducated and uncouth, only just emerged from the backwoods, and twenty-three more years were to pass before he made his first great speech and began to be recognized as an important man.

But already he was pursued by a restless ambition. He was always indeed "the most companionable of men"—the best story teller that ever was known, and could fill his store of an evening with a delighted crowd who would come to hear him sing and tell stories. He was also the hero of the Clary Grove boys, a gang of hearty young ruffians who infested the neighbourhood to the terror of quiet citizens, but who were so much amused and interested by Lincoln that he gained "a complete control over them." But these simple triumphs were not sufficient. From the day that he came to New Salem he is said to have read "more voraciously than ever," and upon an increasing range of books. History, astronomy, philosophy, chemistry, and law—out of which at last he made his living—were all included in his studies. He used to read Paine's "Age of Reason" and translations from the French philosophers, and was for a time regarded as an infidel. Then there was Kirkham's grammar, which he borrowed from a friend and learnt by heart upon the advice of Mentor Graham, the village schoolmaster, with whom he lodged. To Graham he seemed "the most studious, diligent, strait-forward young man in the pursuit of knowledge and literature" that he had ever known. In his reading and study he was, we are told, "a very miser of time," and customers at the store would find him stretched at full length on the counter with his head on a roll of calico reading a book, to which he instantly turned when he had served them. Perhaps it is not surprising that the business soon afterwards "petered out." His friend Denton Offutt disappeared, and Lincoln was left without money or employment.

In this emergency he took two strange resolutions. He resolved, first, to become a candidate for the Parliament of Illinois, and, secondly, to go as a soldier in an expedition against the Black Hawk Indians. On March 9th, 1832, he issued his first political address—"To the people of Sangamon County." It was a long address, giving them in considerable detail his views of local affairs, but it ends with characteristic simplicity. His greatest ambition, he says, is to be "truly esteemed by my fellow men by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. . . . But if the good people in their wisdom shall see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined." A few weeks later he was enrolled in the Black Hawk expedition and elected Captain of his Company. At the war he saw no fighting, but he saw a sight which he remembered long afterwards and recalled with that curious vividness of style which he gradually acquired. He had been sent with a few men of his Company to bury five men who had been killed in a skirmish:—

"I remember," he said, "just how those men looked as we rode up the little hill where their camp was. The red light of the morning sun was streaming upon them, as they lay heads towards us on the ground. And every man had a round red spot on the top of his head, about as big as a dollar, where the redskins had taken his scalp. It was frightful but it was grotesque, and the red sunlight seemed to paint everything all over. I remember that one man had on buckskin breeches."

In so simple a description as that you seem to get the secret of some part at least of the strange influence which he had over everyone with whom he had to deal. Of all the public men whose speeches have been recorded, he was at once the simplest and the most eloquent. Even to-day a hundred years after the words were spoken you may hear the cadence of his voice.

PHILIP MORRELL.

\* "Abraham Lincoln." By Albert J. Beveridge. (Gollancz. 50s.)  
† "Abraham Lincoln." By Lord Charnwood. (Constable.)



## SUNDAY IN WESTMINSTER

THE congregation in Westminster Abbey settled itself heavily and complacently, like a cow, to listen to the preacher. It would be an exaggeration to say that the sermon was chanted over us, but it seemed to me that Canon Woodward knew very well what pitch of tone got the best response from the pillars and arches, and that anyone transported by the service into a mystical state would not have been disturbed by the sermon. No mere orator thinks of pillars and arches, and a subtle detachment in Canon Woodward enables him to think of them. The mere orator pitches his voice to ring in the ears of his hearers.

But if the manner of the sermon was not disturbing, the matter was extremely disturbing. Canon Woodward said he could imagine the Church of England becoming defunct; and the combination of unlike matter and manner gave a skewer-like character to his preaching. If the now neglected doctrine of hell-fire failed to make people good it was probably because the preachers thundered it from their pulpits. Told softly and persuasively it might have alarmed and even edified our grandparents. A disquisition upon the value of prayer or upon the lives of the saints would have been matter to fit the manner of the service that afternoon at the Abbey. But instead, a man of position and authority stood up and repeated with vigour and precision all the most damning outer-world criticisms of the Church; not to contradict them—to agree with them. It was very much as if a newspaper published a leading article upon its chief weaknesses, and gave a fair account of the criticisms of the people who did not read it; or as if a Government confessed that it was so effete that it might as well cease to function. It was not quite human. Even the outcast considers that his existence justifies his existing. Even Parolles, routed and shamed, can say "Simply the thing I am shall make me live." And the Church of England is a great and very old institution, far from outcast, and in no way like Parolles. There are two possible explanations. Probably church-goers have always required shocking into sensibility. If symbols, such as hell-fire, have ceased to have any meaning for them, their priests must use reality and tickle with needles instead of straw. Or this odd frankness and self-criticism in the Church may be a proof of the absurdity of comparing it with other educational institutions or with Governments or newspapers. The Church of England claims that it can afford to be sincere to the point of self-annihilation; it claims in fact to be the Phoenix.

I like a preacher to intone against a stone pillar and let me intercept his words on their passage. Dr. Campbell Morgan (this was at Westminster Chapel early in the autumn) aimed at my private tympanum, in fact, he denied that it was private, and that annoyed me. In addition there was an audience of possibly two thousand to hear the famous preacher, and in a score of small ways the suggestion—rather grotesque—was made, that we were assembled for elaborate family worship. But presently, and amazingly soon, the artistry of the performance as a whole brushed the annoying and the grotesque on one side. To the real artist even vulgarity is forgiven; and Dr. Campbell Morgan is flamboyant rather than vulgar. In a music-hall "turn," a song with a looking-glass, the performer flashes a looking-glass lit by a head-light full in the face of first one man and then another in the audience, and sings the impudent chorus at the victim. Dr. Campbell Morgan used almost precisely the same method to enliven the perceptions of his audience. Of course, he knows that at a certain stage in any oration, there is the danger of

the audience becoming fused into one gigantic ear. And behind such an ear there can be only the mob-intelligence. Then the moment comes when they must be stung back into a sense of individuality, or fall into a lethargy. Dr. Morgan told a Welsh revival story. One Welsh parson said to another, "Has the revival come to your village, brother?" The other: "Yes, brother, it has." "And how many additions to your flock, brother?" "None. But, praise be to God, we have some subtractions." After he had told it, he paused. A Church audience is amused so quietly, it must have perfect silence to hear itself being amused. Then he pounced on them—livid. "I see some of you nod your heads. Yes!" he said, "but go home and consider if you oughtn't to be the subtractions." It was excellently contrived. First that moment when the two thousand sniggered, faintly, genteelly, in perfect unison, then the flashing looking-glass trick, making every man and every woman start back and blink, breaking to bits almost audibly that unified two thousand.

Dr. Campbell Morgan was insolent to his congregation, Canon Woodward fastidious and reserved in his dealings with his, though he wielded a skewer as skilfully as Dr. Morgan wielded a looking-glass. The one was a voice crying in a wilderness of tombs and effigies—and we, the congregation, the cow, had strayed into the wilderness. The other an actor upon the stage, using his hands, his face, his forelock, his whole body, as he bullied his audience from one mood to another. But essentially they were saying the same unpleasant things; essentially they had chosen the same disconcerting text.

LYN LL. IRVINE.

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

THE Gate Theatre Club are to be heartily congratulated on their performance of "All God's Chillun," by Eugene O'Neill. The play deals with "the poignant theme of black-and-white marriages." Fortunately Mr. O'Neill leaves it at that, and treats the subject quite objectively. He seems to have no "message," save that the best negroes will be attracted by white women, and that only the most tiresome of inferiority-complexed women will want to marry negroes. This may or may not be true. Mr. Harold Young gave a magnificent performance as the high-minded young negro. Mr. O'Neill seems to me more important as a poet than as a dramatist, his "theatrical sense" being often at fault. It is hoped to return to this subject in our next issue. The first half of the play was produced in a simple and very adequate *décor*, which it is a real pleasure to praise. "All God's Chillun" is a play to be seen.

\* \* \*

"Clara Gibbins," at the Vaudeville, is a ridiculous play from nearly every point of view. But it contrived to be charming whenever Miss Violet Loraine was on the stage. It was a great pleasure to see this music-hall artist in an ordinary play. The music-halls taught people how to act. Miss Loraine can sit on a chair with conviction, instead of merely looking like an Eton boy being introduced to a duchess. It would be interesting to know whether she was really capable of making the author's words convincing, or whether she rewrote her part as she went along. Certainly her words did not seem written by the people responsible for the rest of the play. The authors, Mr. and Mrs. Stuart, are a couple with a mission, and shot at the audience any amount of muddled morality and mawkish sentiment. "How wonderful it would be to see Miss Violet Loraine in a really good play," you whisper. Frankly, I doubt it. Rather, I believe, that with artists like her, the worse the play the better. Some people make their best bricks when there is no straw. The production of this unsubtle little comedy was about as bad as anything could be. But what can be expected when a very



good-looking actor and a very good-looking actress ought to have appeared thoroughly dishevelled in the first act? Neither they nor the audience would have stood it.

"Caravan," an unromantic comedy, by a German dramatist, Herr Mohr, produced by the Arts Theatre Club, is an unsatisfactory affair. The Shavian technique is ruthlessly applied. The characters all work themselves up into a state of virtuous exaltation, and are then brought violently down to earth by facts. In a way this method is at the basis of all comedy, but in "Caravan" it is applied so mechanically as to lose any significance. Also the moods of exaltation were so vague, silly, and sham-profound, that it was quite impossible to imagine what the author was getting at. I am afraid that Herr Mohr is too essentially frivolous to write a good play. He produced, however, one extremely good character, a dishonest Egyptian tout (the scene is laid in Egypt), who was brilliantly acted by Mr. Reginald Purdell.

As Tchegov was to Russia, so, it seems, are the Quintero brothers to Spain. That indiscriminating entity, the theatre-going public, having refused a run to "Fortunato" and "The Lady from Alfaceque," up bobs Sir Nigel Playfair with "A Hundred Years Old" ("El Centenario") from the same happily collaborative pen. Foreign playwrights of distinction are so seldom appreciated at their true worth by English audiences until a decade or two after their death, that it will not be surprising if rehearsals are shortly occupying the Lyric, Hammersmith. But anyone who cares for Tchegov, or indeed for the art of the theatre at all, should lose no time in seeing "A Hundred Years Old," which is beyond any shadow of doubt the most charming and pleasant play to be seen in London. Part of its charm lies in the fact that, in contrast to the fashionable trend of "non-thesis" drama, there is no "action." It is just the hundredth birthday of a kind, wise, gentle, old philosopher (Mr. Horace Hodges), with his children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren gathered round him, and, as he says at the end of the play, he had a wonderful birthday party, well worth living for. Another point in common with Tchegov is that within five minutes of the first appearance of each character one feels that one has known him for years, and is familiar with his every trick and trait. The general tone is cheerful rather than gloomy, since this is Spain and not Russia. All the people but one are pleasant, and the unpleasant one (Miss Mabel Terry-Lewis) gets a little tipsy in the last act, thus blunting the edge of her unpleasantness, so that one is left with an impression of general goodwill toward man and God. The play is such a delicate flower that it seems cruel to try to dissect it; but two small points of adverse criticism must be made. Miss Terry-Lewis's tipsiness is communicated to another character, which was unnecessary; and, more seriously, we never actually see the centenarian surrounded by his entire family, some of whom, indeed, do not appear at all. This is a pity, because during the whole pleasurable evening we had been looking forward to it. Mr. and Mrs. Granville-Barker's translation leaves nothing whatever to be desired; and the acting of the whole cast, with a single exception, is perfect. (But why do they all pronounce "miracle" "mirriele"?) One actress in particular, Miss Winifred Evans, gives, in by no means the most showy or attractive part, one of the best performances I have seen on the London stage, even at Hammersmith. And it would be ungrateful not to mention the work of Mr. A. E. Filmer as producer. A play to see and see again.

Another Christmas entertainment that has arrived a month early is "The Rose and the Ring," at the Apollo. This is a light opera version of Thackeray's book, adapted and composed by Mrs. Christabel Marillier. Here are Prince Giglio and the rest, straight from Thackeray, though they all have called at Hammersmith on the way. Fortunately, they have brought Mr. Stephen Thomas and Mr. George Sheringham along with them, to produce their play and design their scenery, and all's for the merriest in the merriest of impossible worlds. Mr. Ranalow is at his best

as Giglio, Mr. Stanley Vilven is a magnificently childish Bulbo, with a wig of which Mr. Clarkson may well be proud, Miss Megan Foster is Miss Megan Foster, and Miss Elsie French, if she is not Mrs. Peachum, is at least as gloriously odious as the Countess Gruffanuff as anyone can hope to avoid, and that, to misquote Farquhar, is as much as the worst of us can be.

The New English Art Club continues to exist in spite of the general dullness of its exhibitions, of which it has just opened the seventy-eighth, at the New Burlington Galleries, Burlington Gardens. The present exhibition is, if possible, more completely lacking in any kind of vitality even than its immediate predecessors: why, one wonders, do all these painters—and there are a very considerable number of them—continue to produce these pallid echoes of an uninteresting academic mannerism? They are, for the most part, without feeling, without vigour, they have nothing to say, they have not even technical competence. Enthusiasm badly expressed may have some interest, but here is neither enthusiasm nor means of expression. There are, indeed, a few brighter oases in the desert of boredom—two charming drawings by Mr. Wilson Steer, an attractive landscape by Mr. Alfred Thornton, two or three paintings of the South of France by Mr. Malcolm Milne, which, if slight, are at least cheerful and lively in colour and obviously painted with enjoyment (unlike most of the pictures here), and two really excellent paintings, an oil and a water-colour landscape, by Mr. R. V. Pitchforth, which stand out with refreshing vigour and genuineness of feeling.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, December 1st.—

Orchestral Concert for Children, Central Hall, 11.

The Lener Quartet, at the Queen's Hall, 8.

The Spencer Dyke String Quartet, Victoria and Albert Museum, 8.

Mr. Howard-Jones, Sonata Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.15.

Mr. C. H. James, on "The Design and Building of the Small House," 84-86, Bedford Square, 8.

Sunday, December 2nd.—

Mr. J. A. Hobson, on "Wealth and Welfare," South Place, 11.

Monday, December 3rd.—

Dryden's "Marriage à la Mode," at the Festival Theatre, Cambridge.

"Adam's Opera," at the Old Vic, 7.30.

"Burlesque," by Mr. Arthur Hopkins and Mr. George Watters, at the Queen's.

"Little Eyolf," at the Everyman.

"Jealousy," by Mr. Eugene Walter, at the Fortune.

Tuesday, December 4th.—

The Bach Cantata Club, in the B minor Mass, St. Margaret's, Westminster, 8.

M. Ferenc Molnar's "The Play's the Thing," at St. James's.

Mr. Robert Boothby, on "How the Nation's Money is Spent," the Wireless, 7.

Wednesday, December 5th.—

Wanda Landowska, Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.30.

"Mrs. Moonlight," by Mr. Benn Levy, at the Kingsway.

Eighty Club Dinner to Lord Reading, Frascati's Restaurant, 7.15.

Winifred Christie, Bach Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.15.

Thursday, December 6th.—

Royal Philharmonic Society's Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.

Mr. Eric Maclagan, on "Michel Angelo," Victoria and Albert Museum, 5.30.

Miss Ellen Wilkinson, on "Women of To-day in Politics and Industry," Morley College for Working Men and Women, 61, Westminster Bridge Road, 8.

Friday, December 7th.—

Mr. Evelyn Waugh, on "Dante Gabriel Rossetti," Central Hall, Westminster, 6.

Miss Lynda Grier, on "Women in Industry," the Wireless, 7.25.

OMICRON.

## A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

THE ATHENÆUM, NOVEMBER 26TH, 1828.

TO AMATEURS AND PROFESSORS OF THE FLUTE

MESSRS. RUDALL AND ROSE, whose attention has been for several years devoted to the improvement of the Flute, and whose exertions have been rewarded by the approbation of the most accomplished Amateurs, as well as of the most distinguished Members of the Musical Profession, beg to inform the Nobility and Gentry, that they have on hand a large stock of wood, which has for some years undergone the process of seasoning; and that they can confidently

recommend the Instruments made from this well-prepared material, as being secure against any injury from the distillation of the breath, or the vicissitudes of climate.  
No. 15, Piazza, Covent Garden.

## THE FARM LABOURER DIES IN HOSPITAL

FROM the strait ward once more a poor life's pitched  
Into Eternity; grey airs above  
The English fields and hedges, left enriched  
Once more by love.

FRANCES CORNFORD.

## London Amusements.

## MATINEES FOR THE WEEK.

<b>COURT.</b> Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.	"THE CRITIC," etc.	<b>LYRIC,</b> Hammersmith. Wed & Sat. 2.30.	<b>A HUNDRED YEARS' OLD.</b>
<b>DUKE OF YORK'S.</b> Wed. & Sat., 2.30.	<b>SUCH MEN ARE DANGEROUS.</b>	<b>PLAYHOUSE.</b> Wed., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.	<b>EXCELSIOR.</b>
<b>DRURY LANE.</b> Wed. & Sat., 2.30.	<b>SHOW BOAT.</b>	<b>PRINCES.</b> Wed. & Sat., 2.30.	<b>FUNNY FACE.</b>
<b>GAIETY.</b> Wed., Thurs., Sat., 2.30.	<b>TOPSY &amp; EVA.</b>	<b>ROYALTY.</b> Thurs., Sat., & Dec. 26, 2.30.	<b>BIRD IN HAND.</b>
<b>GARRICK.</b> To-day, Sat., 2.30.	<b>THE RUNAWAYS.</b>	<b>ST. MARTIN'S.</b> Mon., Tues & Fri., 2.40.	<b>"77 PARK LANE."</b>
<b>HIPPODROME.</b> Wed., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.	<b>"THAT'S A GOOD GIRL."</b>	<b>WYNDHAM'S.</b> Wed. & Sat., 2.30.	<b>"TO WHAT RED HELL."</b>
<b>LONDON PAVILION.</b> Tues. & Thurs., 2.30.	<b>THIS YEAR OF GRACE.</b>		

## THEATRES.

**ALDWYCH.** (Gerrard 2304.) NIGHTLY, at 8.15.  
Matinees, Wednesdays and Fridays, 2.30.  
"PLUNDER." A New Farce by Ben Travers.  
TOM WALLS, Mary Brough, and RALPH LYNN.

**COURT.** (Sloane 5137.) "THE CRITIC."  
Followed by "TWO GENTLEMEN OF SOHO."  
EVENINGS at 8.30. MATS., THURS. & SAT., 2.30.

**DRURY LANE.** (Temple Bar 7171.) 8.15 precisely. Wed., Sat., 2.30.  
"SHOW BOAT." A New Musical Play.

**DUKE OF YORK'S.** (Ger. 0313.) EVGS., 8.30. MATS., WED., SAT., 2.30.  
"SUCH MEN ARE DANGEROUS."  
MATHESON LANG ISOBEL ELSOM

**FORTUNE** Temple Bar 7373.  
WEDNESDAY NEXT, at 8.40. FIRST MATINEE, SATURDAY, 2.30.  
"JEALOUSY." By Eugene Walter.  
MARY NEWCOMB and CRANE WILBUR.

**GAIETY.** (Ger. 2780.) EVGS., 8.15. WED., THURS., SAT., 2.30.  
DUNCAN SISTER and MIMI CRAWFORD in  
"TOPSY & EVA."

**GARRICK.** (Gerrard 9513.) "THE RUNAWAYS."  
EDEN PHILLPOTTS' NEW COMEDY.  
NIGHTLY, at 8.40. MATINEE, TO-DAY, SAT., 2.30.

**HIPPODROME, London.** Evenings, at 8.15. Gerrard 0650.  
MATINEES, WEDS., THURS. & SATS., at 2.30.  
"THAT'S A GOOD GIRL."  
JACK BUCHANAN. ELSIE RANDOLPH.

**LYRIC** Hammersmith. "A HUNDRED YEARS OLD."  
EVENINGS, at 8.30. MATS., WED. & SAT., 2.30.  
Horace Hodges, Angela Baddeley, Nigel Playfair, Mabel Terry Lewis.

**PLAYHOUSE.** 8.30 (except Mondays). Mats., Wed., Thurs., Sat., 2.30.  
GLADYS COOPER in "EXCELSIOR." (LAST 2 WEEKS.)  
Ernest Thesiger, Nigel Bruce, Athole Stewart, Hermione Baddeley.

## THEATRES.

**PRINCES.** (Ger. 3400.) FUNNY FACE.  
FRED ASTAIRE, ADELE ASTAIRE, and LESLIE HENSON.  
Evenings, at 8.15. Matinees, Wed. and Sat., at 2.30.

**ROYALTY.** (Ger. 2690.) EVENINGS, 8.30. MATS., THURS. & SAT., 2.30.  
BARRY JACKSON presents  
"BIRD IN HAND."  
A Comedy by JOHN DRINKWATER.

**ST. MARTIN'S.** (Gerr. 1243.) At 8.15. MATS., MON., TUES., FRI., 2.40.  
"77 PARK LANE." By Walter Hackett.  
HUGH WAKEFIELD and MARION LORNE.

**SAVOY.** Evenings, 8.30. Matinees, Monday, Wednesday & Thursday, 2.30.  
"YOUNG WOODLEY."  
FRANK LAWTON. KATHLEEN O'REGAN.

**WYNDHAM'S** (Reg. 5028.) EVGS., 8.30. WED. and SAT., 2.30.  
"TO WHAT RED HELL."  
SARA ALLGOOD, ROBERT HORTON, FREDERICK LEISTER.

## CINEMAS.

**EMPIRE,** Leicester Square. Continuous, Noon—11 p.m. Suns., 6.0—11 p.m.  
"SHIRAZ."  
A Romance of India with All Indian Cast.  
Also ELLA SHIELDS with Movietone Impersonations.

**STOLL PICTURE THEATRE,** Kingsway. (Holborn 3703.)  
DAILY, 2 to 10.45. (SUNDAYS, New Programme, 6 to 10.30.)

December 3rd, 4th & 5th. GILDA GRAY in "THE DEVIL DANCER";  
RIN-TIN-TIN in "A RACE FOR LIFE."  
December 6th, 7th & 8th. MOORE MARRIOTT in "VICTORY"; ESTHER  
RALSTON and NEIL HAMILTON in "SOMETHING ALWAYS HAPPENS."

## ART EXHIBITIONS.

**MAX BEERBOHM'S "GHOSTS."**  
Exhibition of 120 New Caricatures, and  
Exhibition by VERGE SARRAT and MAK.  
LEICESTER GALLERIES, Leicester Square.

## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

## CRIME AND CRIMINALS

THERE have been several interesting crime books lately published. Their vogue and respectability are shown by the fact that an ex-Lord Chancellor and ex-Secretary of State for India is one of the most popular purveyors of this kind of literature. "Famous Trials of History," by the Right Hon. the Earl of Birkenhead, is already in its ninth edition, so that it is not surprising that Lord Birkenhead has been induced to follow up his success and now publish "More Famous Trials" (Hutchinson, 21s.). The selection of trials in this book is rather a jumble; some of them are historical, e.g., Marie Antoinette, Joan of Arc, Charles I., but the majority of them are such well known criminal cases as those of Charles Peace, Mrs. Maybrick, Bywaters and Thompson, Madeleine Smith, and Landru. Lord Birkenhead is not a particularly good narrator, and his statement of the cases is not always marked by that legal clarity which one might have expected from him. The authentic voice of the distinguished lawyer is more often recognizable in the comments on the verdict and reflections on the evidence. These are often very interesting. For instance, Lord Birkenhead says that, if he had been the judge at the Bywaters trial, he would have directed the jury on the same lines as Mr. Justice Sherman, and, if he had been a member of the Court of Appeal, he would not have quashed the conviction, but that he has "a small, lingering doubt whether Edith Thompson on that night was present at a crime which she had arranged, or, indeed, whether she had any idea that any such crime would be attempted."

\* \* \*

I do not think that these criminal anthologies, in which a large number of trials are dealt with in a single volume, are as interesting or as valuable as books which give the history of one single case at length. Lord Birkenhead has necessarily not been able to give to the twenty cases about which he writes the intensive study which would have ensured complete knowledge and accuracy. If you take his account of the Landru case, for instance, and compare it with "Landru," by F. A. Mackenzie, just published in "The Famous Trials Series" (Bles, 10s. 6d.), a well edited book, you will find that the ex-Lord Chancellor is not always accurate. He is wrong about the colour of Landru's beard (of which Landru himself was very proud). He says that Landru was sentenced to four years' imprisonment for swindling on July 20th, 1914, and was in prison when the war broke out, and he adds: "We are not told how it came about that in six months or so he was free again. We may conjecture that the ex-sergeant was released in order to join the French army." The conjecture is wrong, and would have been unnecessary if Lord Birkenhead had had time to get up the facts of his case. Landru was not in prison when the war broke out. He was arrested in July, 1914, but escaped from custody and was sentenced to four years' imprisonment in his absence.

\* \* \*

Another trial included by Lord Birkenhead has just received much fuller treatment in a separate volume: "Trial of Charles the First," edited by J. G. Muddiman, in the "Notable British Trials" series (Hodge, 10s. 6d.). This, again, is a well edited book, and of historical value. Mr. Muddiman has collated the various contemporary accounts and reprints the official report of the trial, now in the Record Office, which he calls "Bradshaw's Journal."

In the trial of kings, it is probably impossible not to be prejudiced, and I am aware that my own prejudices run the opposite way to Mr. Muddiman's. But Mr. Muddiman's sympathy with the King carries him too far. He accepts everything which tells against the Republicans, including the story of the branding of Lady De Lille in the King's presence in Westminster Hall, a story which rests on the flimsiest evidence. Nor is the legality of Charles's trial, except in the narrowest sense, settled by referring to it as "the so-called 'trial' of Charles I." If Charles had shown the same nice scrupulosity for legality during his reign as he did at his trial and as his apologists do in their books, he would never have been tried. Royalists always assume that the divine right to break the law and cut off other people's heads is a prerogative rightly reserved for kings, but the last two thousand years of sanguinary history, which have been the result of this theory, have caused a good many people to doubt its soundness.

\* \* \*

The attitude of people towards ordinary as well as royal criminals changes slowly, but it does change, as you may see if you read a really fascinating reprint: "The Newgate Calendar," a selection with an introduction by Henry Savage (Bodley Head, 12s. 6d.). Knapp and Baldwin's "Newgate Calendar" was published about one hundred years ago, and it is a better anthology of crimes and trials than a good many of its modern imitations. It shows, however, that even in a hundred years we have made, despite the judges, some progress towards a juster and humaner view of crime and criminals. To-day we should not tolerate the execution of Miss Mary Blandy for the murder of her father and allow her seducer and the real murderer, the son of Lord Cranstoun, to escape scot-free. It is improbable that to-day the theft of Pope's "Homer" by an Eton scholar and the son of a baronet would be the first stage on the road to the gallows. Nor is it likely that, if it were, many people would be found to moralize over "the depraved and melancholy course of this ill-fated man" in the style of Knapp and Baldwin.

\* \* \*

Another good crime book is "The Case of Constance Kent," by John Rhode, in "The Famous Trials Series" (Bles, 10s. 6d.). This is the very curious and famous case which occurred in 1860. Constance Kent, aged sixteen, murdered her little brother and was arrested. The proceedings were however stayed. Five years later she confessed and was sentenced to death. The sentence was commuted and she was released after serving twenty years' imprisonment. Finally, I must mention two other very different books which I have read lately. One is "A Handbook on Hanging," by Charles Duff (Cayme Press, 2s. 6d.), a well-written, satirical disquisition on the humane practice of capital punishment. The other is "A New Way With Crime," by A. Fenner Brockway (Williams & Norgate, 7s. 6d.). This is an able and level-headed work on our existing prison system and methods of dealing with juvenile and other offenders. Mr. Brockway has considerable experience, and his analysis of the effects of the present penal system is extremely interesting. He puts forward proposals for reform which deserve the attention of all those who believe that there is still room for improvement in our attitude towards crime.

LEONARD WOOLF.



## REVIEWS

## THE PRINCESS OF PLESS

**Daisy, Princess of Pless.** By HERSELF. (Murray. 25s.)

IN this book we sometimes come near to getting the autobiography of Mrs. Brown, the woman in the street, or, as Mrs. Woolf prefers, in the railway carriage. If thirty-seven years ago Daisy Cornwallis West had lost her heart to a penniless young subaltern, it is unlikely that Mr. John Murray would to-day be publishing in a fat volume her reminiscences of Simla. We should never know what she wore at the Polo Club's private theatricals, or what outrageous lies Mrs. Gadsby spread about her. But Daisy Cornwallis married Hans Heinrich XV. of Pless, and with him a pearl necklace seven yards long, and three castles with a lady in waiting and fifty footmen covered with silver lace in each, and £50,000 a year for household expenses. The Emperor William, King Edward, King Alfonso, and other very important persons became her friends, and she got mixed up in *weltpolitik*. But is the *Durchlaucht* who heads a page in her memoirs "My plan to avoid war," different from our hypothetical Daisy who sang "Two Eyes of Grey" at Rawal Pindi? "All my life long," she says, "people have always insisted on my being a lady, and I have never really wanted to be anything but a tomboy." A tomboy, one must add, with a taste for the limelight. But she genuinely detested pomp, and feeling "like movable furniture ready to be brought out when required, to be gilt and grinning when an Emperor visits us." And she kept that freedom of speech which companions of Royalty almost always lose. When the Emperor was cross, she told him so. She wrote to the Crown Prince that he must never ask a hostess to invite a lady to stay in her house to meet him. She even told King Edward, when he asked her to come for a walk, that she would rather go with someone else. But then she was very, very pretty.

Her book is, of course, packed with little stories. We learn that the Princess Victoria loves photography; that the Emperor never saw a newspaper save one specially edited for him and printed in gold; how Prince Christian dropped his false teeth when riding; how Queen Alexandra sent for Mrs. Keppell to come to the King's deathbed; and how the Emperor's arm was not withered but just ceased growing—"it is like a child of seven's." We hear of the White Stag Club to gain admission to which "everyone had to kneel over a chair and tell a dirty story and be smacked on the behind with the flat of a sword by the Emperor." We get snapshots of the Prussian Court. "The Emperor tried to make himself as agreeable as possible in a loud voice, and the Empress with her hands crossed on her tummy smiled kindly backwards and forwards like an indiarubber doll. . . . She is just like a good quiet soft cow—that has her calves and eats grass slowly and then lies down and ruminates. I looked into her eyes to see if I could see anything there, even pleasure or sadness, but they might have been of glass." There are many outbursts of the Emperor's. "If there is any bother or misunderstanding, it always comes from England." "What the English want is a good thrashing, and they'll get it if they don't take care." And on one occasion, "Oh, I am always misunderstood," he broke out, "there is no one to tell the truth to me," and a tear fell on his cigar. Cassel and Soveral she represents as dangerous enemies of any understanding with Germany, in close contact with the King. "Well, I believe and maintain there will and must be war in the spring," the former declared. He was only fifteen months out.

From the day war broke out, she made little attempt to disguise the growing strength of her pro-English sentiments. She could not speak German, but she insisted on taking a prominent part in Red Cross work. Suppose that a Duchess in England had been a German, speaking only badly broken English; that she had intrigued to get a job on a hospital train, and whenever a train with Germans came by, rushed to talk to them; that she had visited German prison camps and was in constant correspondence with the prisoners; that she had received German newspapers every day, and sent money to Germany every month. Would she have been holding receptions at British G.H.Q.? It is more probable

that she would have been shot. The Princess did the equivalent of all these things, and never got into serious trouble. But, while admiring her courage, one cannot but sympathize with her husband's comment, "I don't think that the Duchess of Connaught who was a German would bother much about the German wounded." Perhaps the richest passage in the book is in a letter from the old Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg Strelitz, a grand-daughter of George III. At the age of ninety-four, in full possession of her faculties, she writes to the Princess: "The death, the tragic end of our great man struck me down so deeply! My faith (earthly one) was placed upon that firm rock! They both deplore his death as he deserved; still their courage never fails." "Our great man" is Lord Kitchener: "they" are King George and Queen Mary. Certainly the behaviour of the Germans to enemy aliens makes ours appear very despicable. Perhaps they were only more snobbish. (It is true that the Emperor supported the Princess with marvellous loyalty throughout the war.) But I fancy they were really more sensible. The unpatriotic feelings of these exalted ladies were very harmless.

The Princess's memoirs have been edited by Major Desmond Chapman Houston. In his introduction he states that the book contains "the authentic history of the tragic suicide of the young Duke of Mecklenburg Strelitz." This is not the case. Also it is regrettable that he should perpetuate the story that Herr von Kühlmann when at the London Embassy was working against his chief, Prince Lichnovsky, and against peace. All the evidence is to the contrary. The book is admirably illustrated. There are particularly exquisite photographs of the Princess as a girl, and of her grandmother, Lady Olivia Fitzpatrick. Altogether it is impossible to read through the book without getting to like its generous, impetuous, rather silly, author. Undeterred by Kings and Emperors, Thurn-Thurns and Salm-Salms, Ladies-in-Waiting, and yards of pearls, she remained her high-spirited self.

RAYMOND MORTIMER.

## NEW NOVELS

**The Case of Sergeant Grischa.** By ARNOLD ZWEIG. (Secker. 7s. 6d.)

**Bright Metal.** By T. S. STRIBLING. (Nisbet. 7s. 6d.)

**Humours Unreconciled.** By SHERARD VINES. (Wishart. 7s. 6d.)

**Superintendent Wilson's Holiday** By G. D. H. and M. COLE. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)

**The Bells of Shoreditch.** By ETHEL SIDGWICK. (Sidgwick & Jackson. 7s. 6d.)

**The Immovable Flame.** By F. E. MILLS YOUNG. (The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.)

**Showgirl.** By J. P. McEVoy. (Brentano. 7s. 6d.)

"THE Case of Sergeant Grischa," a large gentle work, appears to be roaming Europe making a noise like an epic. The story is simple. Grischa, a Russian prisoner, felling trees for the Germans in the winter of 1917, longs to return to his wife. He escapes, lives in the forest with other outlaws, appreciating nature in a manner that would do credit to a member of the German Youth Movement. He continues his journey to the Eastern Front in the clothes of a dead Russian private, is captured, and about to be shot as a spy when he confesses that he is only Grischa, an escaped prisoner. General Schieffenzahn decides that the sentence shall not be altered. To General von Lychow, a kind old man, and to all about him at Mervinsk, where Grischa is imprisoned, this constitutes a test case. "The nation that forsakes justice is doomed," says von Lychow's nephew a little sententiously. "We can't see our country perish just as she thinks her greatness is beginning. Germany is our Mother, and we will not see her ranged upon the side of wrong." Schieffenzahn and von Lychow cross swords; hope advances and retires, advances and retires, for hundreds of pages. In the end Grischa is shot.

By verisimilitude the book defeats its own ends, and in proving war boring almost becomes so itself. Arnold Zweig can write good narrative and makes Grischa's escape from the timber camp exciting, but the story gradually ceases to move of its own accord, and the reader has to lend the author a hand in pushing from behind if the journey is

ever to be completed. Only at moments vitality returns. Grischa, dreaming of the process of his own bodily decay, glides over endless snow, with a bundle on his shoulder which is first his own earlier life and then his unborn child, and the wind takes the flesh from his bones as he goes. But too few moments of an equal imaginative force remain in the mind at the end of the book. Grischa is convincing, a good-natured, shrewd, fatalistic Russian peasant, but he never becomes humanly important, and simplicity alone will not make a tragic hero. It rarely happens that the meaning and interest of a novel are greater than the meaning and interest of its chief characters.

Parts of America at the present day and the Eastern War zone in 1917 represent much the same level of civilization. In "Bright Metal" a young wife, imported into Tennessee from her intellectual dramatic circle in New York, struggles for the same sort of ideals as Grischa's protectors, and with as little success: a vain, sensuous, quick-witted creature, a Hardy-esque heroine planted in an America very little changed since the days of Huckleberry Finn. Agatha finds her neighbours handling guns as nonchalantly as peashooters, and her school-teaching sister-in-law sitting tearfully on the horns of a dilemma. The State will not permit Sister Parilee to go on teaching unless she acquires a degree. But the State at the same time forbids her to believe or to teach the biological theories to which she must subscribe in order to get her degree. The humours and inconsistencies of legislation give ballast to the story of Agatha's half-happy marriage and to the love-affair which springs with such force and then hides itself in the sand and is forgotten. Without attempting to write more than a good story, the author gives the impression that a genuine piece of life has been examined. He wisely leaves it at that and does not force conclusions from the examination. Mr. Sherard Vines in his picture of modern Japan arrives at a definite conclusion, but his group of Europeans at Totsuka, in spite of familiarity with the works of the Sitwells, are cruder and simpler material than the fundamentalists of Tennessee. The writing of "Humours Unreconciled" is pungent, humorous, and very sophisticated; its general effect, dreary. Nothing in particular happens. Various people commit adultery or try to. Alba Sheepshanks drinks herself to the edge of a premature grave. Mr. Podler is drowned.

"Superintendent Wilson's Holiday" and "The Bells of Shoreditch" both make cheerful reading, for our attention is turned from the wretched sinner to the abstract and entertaining sin. The first makes supremely cheerful reading; as in all good detective books, it matters not at all how cruel the murder as long as it is clever enough, or how pitiable the murderer, provided that his discovery is not too simple. The neatest and most satisfying thing in the book is Barton's device, by a mere telephone call simultaneously establishing an alibi and murdering his friend; but all eight stories are worth reading.

The Sherriff family in Miss Sidgwick's novel set themselves up as amateur detectives in a polite way, and give us crumb by crumb the odd history of the Fiske family. During the war Mrs. Fiske-Jerrold collected jewels to be sold for refugees. The diamonds given her by a prima donna disappeared and the matter remained an uncomfortable mystery. The Sherriffs themselves are tiresome people: folk dancing plays a large and quite serious part in their lives and in the book. Miss Sidgwick approves warmly of the modern young person living in a haphazard but idealistic fashion in Bloomsbury. But the Ephraimite cannot say Shibboleth, and the slang Miss Sidgwick puts upon the lips of the inhabitants of the Bloomsbury Super-house points to a kindly fiction. Over the Fiske family, however, she contrives excellently. The old-fashioned and pretty daughter of Mrs. Fiske-Jerrold moons in the country with a cranky dentist as a guardian. Neil Armiter, her mother's enemy, the real thief, comes cloaked and secretly to make love to her, and Karen the servant by self-effacement plays the part of Pandarus. The half-dozen characters involved in this, move neither quite on nor quite off the scene, and are like people who have passed a previous and exhausting existence in one of Henry James's novels. But if they ceased to be shadowy, they might cease to allure.

The remaining two novels stand by themselves. What

"The Immovable Flame" does not tell the reader by the title, it will tell him in less than an hour's reading, so smoothly runs the traditional tale of jealous, alcoholic husbands, unscrupulous foremen, and of Fate which always clears all such out of the way and leaves the girl widow in the arms of her Immovable Flame, gazing at the South African sun in its cloudless sky. But for that hour the book will engage the reader's attention, because Miss Mills-Young has skill. Although the obvious always does happen, by her good management she continually creates a slight uncertainty as to whether it will or not.

"Showgirl," a stage romance, is told with the ingenuity and liveliness we expect from America, by a series of letters, Press cuttings, telegrams, and dialogues. Once or twice it hovers on the verge of good satire, but is in too great a hurry to pause there or anywhere. The artistic origins of this work are obscure—perhaps an intrigue between a circus pony and a saxophone.

L. LL. I.

### THE INNOCENCE OF "GENTLE GEORGE"

*The Letterbook of Sir George Etherege.* Edited by SYBIL ROSENFELD. (Milford. 18s.)

THE innocence of Etherege lay in his inability to distinguish between one place, or one set of circumstances, and another; and his failure to see any relation between his private and his official self. He was also altogether too innocent about his secretary, Hugh Hughes, and a little too innocent about women. Innocence is a charming quality, but, like other virtues when carried too far, is apt to give rise to comedy. That is what happened in this instance.

In London, Etherege had been famous as a writer of plays, of which Dryden enormously admired the prose (his reference, of course, is to the prose of the plays, and not, as Miss Rosenfeld suggests, to that of the letters); and he had also been notorious as a ruffler and a rake. These things went down in the London of Charles II., but they were not regarded with the same tolerant eye in Ratisbon, where the envoys of the Imperial Electors, and of others, met to discuss some things of importance, and some of none at all, in an almost mediæval atmosphere of punctilio. Etherege could not see the difference between London and Regensburg. Again, he thought that if he did his duty as an envoy and sent home good reports, it was nobody's affair how he behaved in his spare time. And to prevent himself from dying of boredom and formality, he had to try to crowd all the vices of his old friends Rochester, Buckingham, Buckhurst, and Sedley, into his own skin. He had no inkling that all the while his worthy secretary was sending lively accounts of his doings back to London for the entertainment of posterity; nor did he hear what his feminine acquaintance was saying about him behind his back. All these things are revealed little by little in the Letterbook, slipped in between conscientious accounts of dull debates, which, however, are sometimes wittily written.

The Letterbook was acquired by the British Museum in 1838: Macaulay seems to have known it, but it was never again pillaged until Sir Edmund Gosse made some extracts, to be followed by Mr. John Palmer and others. It has never before been published, and Miss Rosenfeld and the Oxford Press are to be congratulated upon their venture. The work has needed doing for a long time, for not only is it the sole at all full authoritative document we have about Etherege, but it also gives us an interesting glimpse into European politics between 1668 and 1689. The edition includes the two famous letters to Buckingham, the recently discovered letter from Turkey, where Etherege was diplomatically employed in 1668, and a few others. It is an extremely welcome addition to our volumes of the period, as well as being in many places excellent reading in itself.

Miss Rosenfeld has done her work well, though it is not certain that all her statements will meet with approval from the scathing eye of Mr. Brett Smith, our greatest authority on Etherege. The notes, without which the personal and political references are baffling, are plentiful and to the point, while the introduction covers all the necessary ground, and established some new facts. It is a pity, however, that Miss Rosenfeld should have thought fit to defend Etherege's



morals. With whom Etherege was sinfully intimate two hundred and fifty years ago is about as important as what Mr. Smith said to Mr. Jones in the Croydon train yesterday about Mrs. Brown's behaviour with young Doodle at last Sunday's tea-fight. This itch to excuse has led her into some curious overstatements, such as that "it must be borne in mind that, licence being the fashion of the age, only contempt would fall upon the gallant, courtier, or man of the world who did not indulge in it." It is true that Miss Rosenfeld might have argued from one of Lee's prologues:—

"But since that law and treachery came in  
And open honesty was made a sin. . .  
There's scarce a man that ventures to be good,  
For truth by knaves was never understood."

but prologues were mere satirical extravaganzas, and one thinks of Temple or Evelyn, or the far from profligate Dryden and Halifax. Again, Etherege was generous, kindly, impulsive, intolerant, at once more sensual and more exquisite than most men, but one need not for that compare him favourably with the "wooden" figure of Congreve. He was obviously a fairly able man of affairs; but, in spite of a certain superficial maturity, he always remained much of a child. Whence, of course, his innocence. That this innocent maturity has its charm, just as the knowing unlickedness of a precocious child has its horror, may be judged by a short extract from one of the letters to Buckingham, where Etherege complains of the vast amount of liquor he has to swill in Bavaria:—

"To unbosom myself frankly and freely to your Grace. I always looked upon drunkenness to be an unpardonable crime in a young fellow, who without any of these foreign helps, has fire enough in his veins to enable him to do justice to Caelia whenever she demands a tribute from him. In a middle-aged man, I consider the bottle only as subservient to the nobler pleasure of love, and that he would suffer himself to be so far infatuated by it, as to neglect the pursuit of a more agreeable game, I think deserves no quarter from the ladies. In old age, indeed, when 'tis convenient very often to forget and steal from ourselves, I am of opinion that a little drunkenness, discreetly used, may as well contribute to our health of body as tranquillity of soul."

BONAMY DOBRÉE.

## EXECUTORS

The task of finding a capable and responsible person who is willing to act as an executor or trustee is not easy. In addition, an executor so appointed is no less liable to die than the testator himself, in which event the whole problem is raised anew and fresh expense entailed—possibly at an inopportune moment.

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## MODERN PHYSICS

**The Bases of Modern Science.** By J. W. N. SULLIVAN. (Benn 12s. 6d.)

MR. SULLIVAN'S title is perhaps unduly wide. His book professes to be "an attempt to expound the main ideas of physical science in non-technical language," and we may say at once that the attempt is remarkably successful in spite of its ambitious nature. But science, however we may define it, is more than merely physics. The biologist or the economist—if they are not "men of science," what are they? Yet most of them take the conclusions of physics for granted, and would be within their rights in maintaining that their doctrines and theories would be in no degree affected if the conservation of energy went by the board—as some people too hastily thought that it would have to go when radium was discovered—or if entirely new theories of the ether and the atom were established. All the same, Mr. Sullivan is quite justified in claiming that the concepts of physics are the ultimate bases of all science, for we have not got beyond the aim of Stevenson's reformer in abolishing matter, and the repercussions of physical theory must resound through every scientific laboratory and lecture-room.

Mr. Sullivan, who is already well known as a lucid popularizer of recent physical discoveries, now undertakes to carry the reader from Newton to Einstein, and to explain "the most essential and important scientific concepts to that large class of readers who have had no scientific training." He prides himself on having "not once introduced a mathematical expression, however simple." What he means is that a great deal of modern physics is most easily expressed in the form of differential equations, and these he has duly eschewed, giving his reader merely the gist of conclusions which only a mathematician can criticize. Even so, it would be a mistake to suppose that his book is light reading, but whoever is willing to give a few hours to its careful study will find that he has gained a clear notion of the work which has been done by mathematicians and physicists in the last three centuries towards their ideal aim of giving "a complete mathematical description of phenomena in terms of the fewest principles and entities." Mr. Sullivan knows what he writes about and (as Cromwell said) "loves what he knows." Hence his book is at once clear, exact, and interesting.

The most crucial test which can be applied to any book of this kind, we suppose, is to ask how far it enables the "man in the street" to comprehend the revolution which Einstein's work has produced in our ideas of the material universe and its constitution. To expound Einstein without the help of mathematical language is indeed an Icarian task, but Mr. Sullivan has come as near success as is possible. We cannot summarize his summary in a paragraph, but we can strongly commend it to our readers. He makes it clear why we have to admit "that length and time-lapse are relative notions conditioned by the observer's motion, just as the shape of a penny is a relative thing, conditioned by the observer's position in respect to it." He shows how it follows that the speed of light, though not infinite, must be the same to an observer meeting it or going away from it. We know of electrons which move with a velocity of more than 150,000 miles per second. If we could mount a minute observer with his instruments on such an electron, it is a hard saying that the speed of light would still seem to him to be 186,000 miles per second, whether he were meeting it head on or were moving in the same direction with it. But this is a consequence of the Einstein theory, and Mr. Sullivan has succeeded in making it comprehensible.

It is a small thing in comparison that Einstein has got rid of the necessity of gravitation—an idea "so wild that it seems to have occurred to only one man in the history of science." For this reason alone, Einstein's theory is preferable to that of Newton, on the ground of its greater simplicity. It has farther been tested by its application to three cases of physical phenomena with which the Newtonian theory was incompetent to deal, and it has emerged triumphantly from the test in each case. These are the fact that "the light sent out by vibrating atoms on the sun is of lower frequency than the light sent out by similar atoms on the earth"; the motion of the perihelion of the planet Mercury;

and the bending of light-rays when they pass close to the sun, as shown by the apparent displacement of stars seen almost in a line with the sun during a total eclipse. Einstein has explained these three facts in a way that Newton could not do, and this experimental verification may be said to have finally—or at least till further knowledge comes—established his theory. Its philosophical essence is that it "enables us to isolate those absolute features of the world which are entirely independent of the observer," and, as Mr. Sullivan suggests, it might be called a Theory of Absolutes more properly than a Theory of Relativity. Whatever we call it, we must admit that Einstein has done more than any man since Newton to enable us to penetrate "the various entanglements, weights, blows, clashings, motions, by which things severally go on."

### A PHILOSOPHER OF THE MIDDLE PATH

**Havelock Ellis: Philosopher of Love.** By HOUSTON PETERSON.  
Illustrated. (Allen & Unwin. 18s.)

MR. PETERSON, an American, began with the intention of producing a study of the ideas of Havelock Ellis, but it was not long before he found himself at work upon a comprehensive biography. In the present volume the two aspects are interwoven into the single story of the progress and development of one of the outstanding pioneering spirits of the last half-century, of whose life a knowledge is not perhaps essential, but is certainly helpful for an appreciation of his achievement. It is undoubtedly just to acclaim Havelock Ellis as one of the most original figures of our time, but for many reasons it is easier to discern and display that originality in the man himself than in his work alone. Owing to the, at first sight, negative nature of some of his finest qualities, it is not difficult to overlook, to underestimate, the placid, passive spirit working steadfastly along its own lines, following its own path without reference to that of others, and abjuring all set systems and methods, orthodoxies and dogmas; for its originality lies less in the subjects and their treatment than in the attitude which the treatment reveals.

Placid and passive Ellis has always been, but with the passivity of the branch which bends to the storm, only, when the storm is over, to spring back to its upward growth. As far back as 1888 Olive Schreiner wrote to him, in recognition: "You of all people I ever met are a man of the study. You are perfectly dead on the other side. That is your weakness and your strength. That is why you will do great and useful work in the world." It is only when one turns to the life itself that one is able to realize not only how true that is, but how persistent and uninterrupted the upward growth has been. It is an astonishing fact that at sixteen years old Ellis had already settled that his life-work was to be the study and clarification of problems of sex, and that at nineteen, reading the forgotten speculations of James Hinton for the first time, he passed through a psychological crisis to the attainment of an *enduring* attitude of perfect acceptance of all that life might have to offer. Almost more astonishing, one finds his freedom subsequently from inner conflict of any kind and the undeviating manner in which for thirty years he carried out his appointed task to its specified conclusion. "In no fundamental sense did Havelock Ellis develop after 1878." Hinton certainly brought about his "conversion," but even that was irrelevant to his purpose, and within five years at most he had freed himself from any taint of the other's dangerous emotionalism and returned to "his own original and central aim, the scientific study of the actual facts of sex." When in his twenties he studied medicine for six years at a London hospital and qualified as a physician and surgeon, it was not with any idea of earning a living by that means—in fact, he scarcely practised at all—but solely to gain knowledge for his higher ends. The greatest friendship of his life was with Olive Schreiner—it is even suggested that but for her "pathological opposition" to marriage she might have become his wife—but not all her passionate protests against social injustices could sway him an inch aside from his quiet purpose. Again, though since 1898 he has acclaimed many times the value of Freud's achievements, he has refused

consistently to become his disciple or to accept his position as a whole. Listening to all and approving many, he has yet adopted none, preserving unchanged his attitude, his purpose, and his manner. It was more than fifteen years before even the first of the original six volumes of "Studies in the Psychology of Sex" was felt to be ready for the printer, and when, in 1909, the sixth was completed he regarded his life's work as ended, and though he has written not a little since, he seems to have settled down, quite unlike Shaw, to an autumnally ripe, but none the less definite, old age. His work was done; the rest could only be postscript.

In his self-restraint, as in his self-possession, he has proved himself, above all, a Philosopher of the Golden Mean. Always he has chosen "the mediating position." For even the lowest degradations of sexual perversions he asked no more and no less than that they should be studied with "the disinterested calm of Nature." With Aristotle he has held that virtue lies in the middle path between excess and deficiency. It is his insistence upon the necessity of this vital equilibrium, this "dynamic harmony," which gives him his importance to-day as a moralist. It is the essence of his attitude that he has looked at life as a spectacle, and has discovered in it, lived properly, a true harmony, a basic beauty. He is content to accept life as it reveals itself to him, without protest or probing beyond it. "He is indicted," says his biographer, "not because he affirms so much, but because he would mutilate so little."

This is a good book, and a necessary one, because, in the first place, it brings out the essential significance of Havelock Ellis in these and many other connections; and, again, because it presents a mass of authoritative detail not previously available. In addition to the advantage of being preceded by Dr. Goldberg's pioneer study, Mr. Peterson has had the personal assistance of Mr. Ellis himself, and is consequently able to quote from quantities of unpublished notes and letters. It may be a little over-long, and in places displays a tendency to journalese and somewhat unqualified eulogy, while the criticism is capable rather than strikingly

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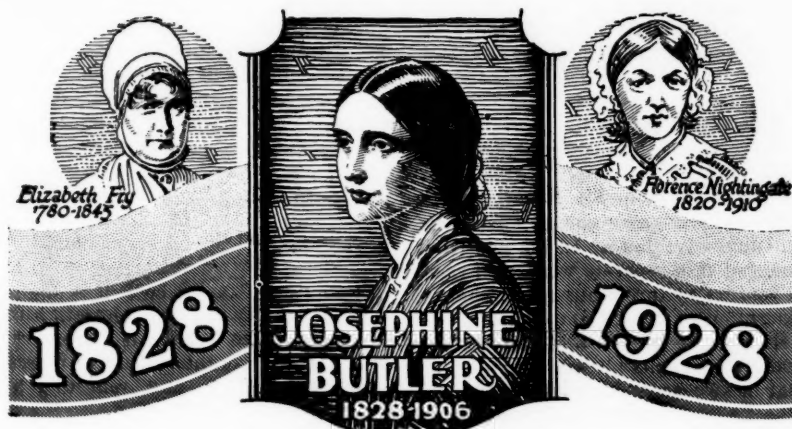
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THIS YEAR, therefore, the centenary of her birth, it is fitting to do honour to her memory. Public opinion has still to be educated to the point that there can be but one moral standard—and that this must voluntarily be kept—for the physical as well as the moral well-being of the community.

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profound; nevertheless, these are small blemishes upon a book which, with its bibliography and very full index, is likely to be of use and interest for a great many years ahead.

### SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

**The Return to Laissez Faire.** By ERNEST J. P. BENN. (Benn. 6s.)

We have only one criticism to make of Sir Ernest Benn's book—that it has not been published, as it should have been, with illustrations by Mr. Gluyas Williams. In the hope that Mr. Williams may be induced to co-operate with Sir Ernest in a future edition, we venture to throw out a few suggestions for the joint consideration of author and artist.

To begin with, we should like to see a picture of the "little group of political 'discontents'" which "met on several occasions" a year or two ago "to discuss ways and means of dealing with the Collectivist mania then and now sweeping through human affairs." We have a strong suspicion that the "little group" included Fred Perley, Ed. Dimmick, and others whose activities Mr. Williams has already immortalized, and that its place of meeting was a first-class compartment on the Southern Railway somewhere between Surbiton and Waterloo. Similar esoteric gatherings, concerned not less deeply with the problem of reviving "that sense of personal pride which threatened to desert the English character" take place, we believe, every day.

Next, there might well be one or two thumbnail sketches of Sir Ernest in patriotic mood. "It is not necessary," he declaims, "to be a Jingo or to be conceited to believe that England, this tiny little island, Merrie England, as it might be called, has in point of fact given to the world everything that it possesses except art, music, and philosophy." (Why he should go out of the way to underline these trifling exceptions is not explained.) Or again: "Let us believe, as we are entitled to believe, that the Englishman is the best thing civilization has yet produced." In spite of this, we are making a mess of things; while the Americans, who "are not considered to be an educated people," are doing much better, and are even enthusiastic about education.

There are illuminating *dicta* concerning the social tendencies of the day which could also be aptly illustrated by Mr. Williams. "Our dukes and lords and millionaires are among the most humble people in the land." On the other hand, it is doubtful "whether the status and quality of the Civil Service will stand the strain of the recent introduction of hoards (*sic*) of the school board type." As, however, the book consists mainly of a scathing exposure of the follies of bureaucracy, such as every suburban home not inhabited by a bureaucrat delights in, this would hardly seem to matter. The mysterious "hoards" (Sir Ernest always spells them this way, perhaps because he is worried about what they cost) are the real villain of the piece; one is led to suppose that the sooner they break down under the strain of their own incompetence the better.

Finally, some pictures illustrating Sir Ernest's economic and statistical arguments would add to the enjoyment with which we have perused them. "We have poured out the national income to carry out what I may call the soap-box policy until we have arrived at an expenditure of £3 per week per family—that being the sum that week by week goes into and comes out of the public purse." Our expenditure on all social services is in fact about 13s. per week per family, but it is wonderful what a "little group" can do when it applies its collective mind to a problem.

We rise, however, upon stepping stones of our statistical selves to much higher things than this. "In the twenty-five years from 1900 to 1925 we spent more public money upon building houses for the working classes than was spent upon civil government and all public purposes of every kind, except war, in the whole of the century from 1800 to 1900." But, after all, what we wasted on houses is nothing to what we waste upon bureaucrats. "To-day we are putting into the hands of the bureaucrats, national and local, no less a sum than £1,000,000,000 a year." But this is hardly surprising, for "we must have in the neighbourhood of a million bureaucrats" (to say nothing of "a hundred thousand trade-union officials, a hundred thousand association bureaucrats, and goodness knows how many lawyers and

accountants, none of the whole of this huge army producing anything"). A few of these "hoards" might be turned without undue delay on to revising our official statistics in the light of these valuable data.

Please, Mr. Gluyas Williams, if this review should happen to fall into your hands, will you see what you can do?

### THE QUALITY OF MERCY

**The Gospel and the Law.** By HIS HONOUR SIR EDWARD PARRY. (Heinemann. 8s. 6d.)

SIR EDWARD PARRY'S book is a happy reflection of the fact that the quality of mercy blesseth him that gives no less than him who takes. This is a remarkably pleasant volume. It is absorbingly interesting as a treatise on the theory and practice of law; and, reflecting a many-sided and very gracious personality, it has also the charm of autobiography and good essay writing. As most readers will know, Sir Edward has seen long service as a County Court judge. Coming of a race of barristers, he himself was called to the Bar in 1885, and during the next ten years built up, for so young a man, a very big practice in the Northern Circuit. But success took him away from the "books and pictures and journalism and domestic life and social hobbies" that meant more to him than the glittering prizes that might have been won, and in 1894 he became County Court Judge of Manchester. He did not take this step, he tells us, under any sense of compulsion. Yet deep within himself he must have felt that in County Court administration lay his true mission in life. Certainly no other career could have offered him better scope for that disinterested service on behalf of the poor which has characterized his thirty-odd years at Manchester and Lambeth.

Of one aspect of Sir Edward's book it must be enough to say that it is packed with interesting reminiscences and anecdotes, intersprinkled with historical commentary and salted with whimsical humour and irony. But Sir Edward

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ROUTLEDGE

∴

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has also a message to deliver, and it is with this that we would here concern ourselves. There are two main planks in his platform. First, he views indignantly the gulf which still separates rich from poor in the matter of obtaining "justice." A rich man, for example, may go "bankrupt," while the poor man, owing to the loopholes left in the Debtors Act of 1869, may still be imprisoned for insolvency. Imprisonment for debt is, to Sir Edward's mind, a relic of barbarism. The only people to whom it is of real benefit are, he asserts, the "tally-men, the moneylenders, the flash jewellery touts, the sellers of costly Bibles in series, of gramophones, and other luxuries of the mean streets," whose business can only be carried on and made to pay by the possibility of County Court proceedings. In this matter the law sides with the knaves against the fools, and it is one of the cardinal points in Sir Edward's creed that the fools rather than the knaves should be protected. In respect of divorce, again, injustice is rampant. The law may, as Sir Edward says, "be open to all—like the Ritz Hotel." But of what possible service is a single and costly Divorce Court in London to penniless sufferers in Liverpool or Newcastle-on-Tyne? Incidentally, it should be said that Sir Edward is a strong advocate of the decentralization of all legal and administrative activities. Though himself among their number, he castigates legal men for their selfishness and lack of vision. But, if he often pronounces "woe" unto the lawyers, he has nothing but withering contempt for the bureaucracy who hide themselves in the palatial and complacent comfort of Whitehall, into which no light of imagination or spark of real human feeling is allowed to enter.

Most interesting among Sir Edward's constructive suggestions are his proposal for the establishment of a Public Defender, as an offset to the Public Prosecutor, and his plea for the creation of Conciliation Courts upon the Norwegian model, of which he provides detailed information. He contrasts, again, the muddled and expensive operation of the Workmen's Compensation Act in this country with Canada's far simpler and more effective scheme. Sir Edward, however, is not content with making suggestions for the better working of existing laws. His whole book reflects the bold spirit of one who, as a convinced Christian, believes that our current laws are very far removed from being synonymous with "justice," and that justice itself should be tempered with mercy. The Gospel of Christ should increasingly supersede our prevailingly pagan or Old Testament codes. Here Sir Edward realizes that he is treading upon thorny ground, since interpretations of Christianity differ so widely. Catholic readers, for instance, will squirm under his airy dismissal of the sacramental theory of marriage as a "modern myth." But even they can hardly fail to be moved by the sincerity and humanity that give glow and passion to his pages.

## ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

"THE Golden Dragon Library" (Routledge, 6s. each) is a new series which deserves welcome. Its volumes are connected with the East or are translations of Eastern books. The first four to be issued are: "The Wiles of Women," Turkish stories by J. A. Decourdemanche; "The Porcelain Junk," by Joseph Delteil; "The Shoji," by Kikou Yamata; "The Book of the Marvels of India," by Buzurg Ibn Shahriyar. The volumes are well bound and printed on yellow paper. Our only criticism is that a short editorial note would be welcome in all cases, and that the language from which the translations are made should be indicated.

"Indian Culture through the Ages," by S. V. Venkateswara (Longmans, 12s. 6d.), begins well with Vol. I., Education and the Propagation of Culture, and is the first of a series of volumes on Indian Culture. Another interesting book on India is "Living India," by Savitri Zimand, with an introduction by "A. E." (Longmans, 10s. 6d.). It has some admirable photographs.

"Everyman's Wireless," by Ernest H. Robinson (Cassell, 3s. 6d.), is a practical book, and sets out to tell in non-technical language "what the average man wants to know about wireless." In "Motoring To-day and To-morrow"

(Methuen, 5s.) the Earl of Cottenham, an experienced motorist and writer on motoring, discusses some of the problems of driving to-day and in the near future.

Messrs. Burns, Oates & Washbourne publish "A Chesterton Catholic Anthology" (6s.), containing quotations from Mr. G. K. Chesterton's writings which deal with religious subjects.

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

**The "Genius."** By THEODORE DREISER. (Constable. 10s.)

In appearance, this is a formidable and unprepossessing book. It is nearly eight hundred large, well-covered pages in length. It is by a writer who has not yet succeeded, and probably never will succeed, in recommending himself to the more fastidious English public as many of his countrymen, in reality less talented than he, have done. Before the task of reading this novel, even a bold heart might sink. But it is not difficult to read. Only, it is advisable to read it quickly, in large amounts at a time, so that you are finished before you have time to grow tired, and it is possible to read it in this manner because the writing is very simple, almost naive. The novel, read in its entirety, will not reverse the opinion, formed in the first two or three hundred pages, that it is wasteful, ponderous, naive, but it will destroy the finality of this opinion. For, from the novel, in its entirety, there emerge a picture and a conception of some significance. The story is simple in outline. Eugene Witla is an artist. In a first rush of inspiration, he paints several great pictures, and then, for more than ten years, his genius fails him. In that time, he becomes a big business man, but, on the ruin of his fortune, his genius, in some degree, returns. Throughout his life, he is attracted by beautiful women, Stella, Ruby, his wife Angela, Christina, Carlotta, and Suzanne. Perhaps it is presumptuous to make the comparison, but Mr. Dreiser may, in two important respects, be compared with Hardy. Like Hardy, he sees men at the mercy of fate, and fate, with him, is chemistry. Life, in the last analysis, is composed of certain organisms which are attracted to certain others, and to none but those. At the top of the scale, there is the wife Angela, young and beautiful, but the husband Eugene is attracted to Christina, Carlotta, Suzanne, and, in the process of attraction, Angela is crushed and Eugene is degraded. Mr. Dreiser is, as Mr. Woolf once said of Hardy, a natural writer. His prose is bad, naive, coarse, uncultivated, but from the incorruptible honesty of the writer it derives, in the mass, a certain nobility, a certain flow, beside which the polished and lucid periods of a Hergesheimer seem merely elegant trifling.

**The Diary of Philipp von Neumann.** Edited by E. BERESFORD CHANCELLOR. Two vols. (Allan. 42s.)

The publisher's statement on the jacket that "this extremely interesting diary is one of the most important social memoirs since the Greville Journals" raises expectations which are disappointed. The writer of the Diary was an Austrian diplomatist, and for a large part of the period covered by it, 1819-1850, he was accredited to the Austrian Embassy in London. He moved in the "highest society," and was continually dining and staying with the Duke and other famous people. But he was a dull man, or at any rate a dull diarist. He hardly ever records an interesting conversation, or even an interesting remark. The diary is just worth reading as a contemporary record by anyone greatly concerned with the period, but it has little historical value.

**Advertising and the Law.** By F. P. BISHOP, LL.B. (Benn. 15s.)

The dictionary gives the following definition of an advertisement: "A public notice or announcement of a thing." This in a sense is accurate, but in modern commercial practice the word has acquired a more specialized meaning. The author of this really excellent book points out that no court of law has yet been called upon to define the legal meaning of the term "advertisement," but he supplies one when he says that advertising means the publication of notices or announcements with a special motive over and above the mere information of the public, the motive usually being the commercial interest of the advertiser. The book is a valuable addition to the number of books bearing on the practice of advertising. It is not a mere legal statement of cases and statutes, for the author, in addition to a wide legal experience, has had the day-to-day experience on the advertising side of a great national newspaper. The book is well arranged, and deals with the relationship between publisher and advertiser, the advertiser and the public, and with the question of agency.

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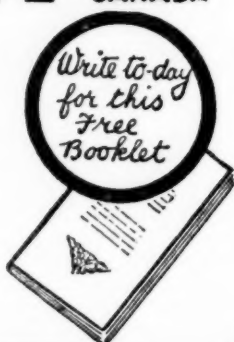
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## FINANCIAL SECTION

## THE WEEK IN THE CITY

## NEW YORK—VICTOR TALKING—UNITED RAILWAYS OF HAVANA—LONDON TIN

**A**SURE index of speculation in America is the price of seats on the New York Stock Exchange. Fifty years ago a seat cost about as much as a membership in a fashionable American golf club, say \$5,000. From 1919 to 1925 it cost as much as \$100,000. To-day it is costing over \$500,000. An American trust company in its latest bulletin has given some charts which show how the price of Stock Exchange seats rises and falls with the flow and ebb of popular speculation. In the last fifty years there have been twelve well-defined "bull" markets on the New York Stock Exchange, and it is curious to observe that in nearly every case they lasted about two years. The advances in stock prices in 1924 and 1925 are considered as one "bull" market and the rise beginning in 1927, after the 1926 lull, as another. Will this one last into 1929? It is now certain that 1928 will establish many new industrial records in America. The automobile industry, helped by the renascent Ford works, will probably beat its 1926 record of 4½ million motor vehicles. Ford alone is moving towards the mark of two million vehicles a year. Steel production will probably be up by 13½ per cent., and the consumption of tin and copper will probably show an increase of from 5 to 10 per cent. Increased production means increased competition, particularly in the automobile industry, and this may be severe enough to call a halt—some time in 1929—to the "bull" markets.

It is often argued that the present "bull" movement in New York is strictly "selective." Let us consider Victor Talking Machine common shares which have enjoyed a rise from \$36 in 1927 to \$150 this year. How much of it is justified? Victor Talking earned in 1927—after allowing for depreciation and income tax—\$7,269,523. Of this sum \$40,008 represented dividends on shares in Victor Talking of Canada and \$538,310 dividends on 850,000 ordinary shares (then 8s. paid) in the Gramophone Company (H.M.V.) in respect of the H.M.V. year ending June, 1927, when a dividend of 40 per cent. was paid. A call of 4s. (carrying 1s. premium) was made on these H.M.V. shares in November, 1927, and a further call of 4s. (carrying 1s. premium) in November, 1928. The time when the final call of 4s. will be made is, in the opinion of the H.M.V. chairman, "not far distant." In respect of the H.M.V. year ending June, 1928, the Victor Talking will therefore receive dividends of 55 per cent. on 850,000 shares 8s. paid for approximately four months and 12s. paid for approximately eight months, say \$1,209,265. The net profits of Victor Talking for the nine months to September 30th, 1928, have been returned at \$4,646,616. These earnings include presumably the interim dividend of 10 per cent. paid by H.M.V. in May, 1928. Allowing for the final dividend of 45 per cent., and the dividends from other foreign subsidiaries, it is estimated that the net profits of Victor Talking for the twelve months ending December, 1928, will exceed \$8,000,000, without allowing for the undistributed earnings of its foreign subsidiaries.

The capital of Victor Talking at December 31st, 1927, amounted to \$20,143,680 in preference shares of \$100, 121,139 convertible \$6 preferred shares of no par value (convertible at the rate of two common for one preferred) and 571,087 common shares of no par value. There is no bonded debt. Allowing for the conversion of all the \$6 preferred shares into common shares, the number of common shares would be increased to 813,365. On the basis of estimated net profits of \$8,000,000 (after allowing for preference dividend) the Victor Talking common shares in 1928 would be earning \$9.83 a share against dividends of \$4 a share. Hence at the present price of 148 the common shares would yield 6.6 per cent. on earnings and 2.7 per cent. on dividends. When the H.M.V. shares are fully paid the earnings of Victor Talking common shares would be increased by \$1.38 per share as compared with 1928. The

speculative buying is, however, "going for" something more than earnings. There is the prospect of an amalgamation between Victor Talking and Radio Corporation. That negotiations are going on has not been denied. There is also the prospect of a bonus distribution by the H.M.V. The chairman of the Gramophone Company, at the general meeting on November 14th, hinted that when the partly paid shares were fully paid, they would "consider a share distribution to increase the capital to a figure showing a closer representation of our tangible assets." Competition is, of course, growing in the gramophone trade. It is probable that the H.M.V. will be forced to take over the most virile of its competitors in Great Britain who are planning to manufacture and market cheap records. But provided the gramophone trade has not reached saturation, the shares of Victor Talking are likely to remain one of the stars of the Wall Street firmament.

It seems appropriate from time to time to consider a stock that has gone down. All the stocks—debentures, preference and ordinary—of the United Railways of the Havana have been a falling market this year. This has followed on the loss of traffics which in turn has followed on the depression in the Cuban sugar industry. The net receipts for the year ending June 30th, 1928, amounting to £739,727, were 16 per cent. below those of 1926-27, and 23.6 per cent. below those of 1925-26. It is difficult to discover from the accounts exactly what the Company earned in the year ending June 30th, 1928. It would appear that, after providing for payments under the rolling stock hire agreements, but not for expenditure of £127,828 on special works, the interest on the debenture stocks was just about covered, but that nothing was provided for the interest on the preference stock. The chairman at the general meeting did not hold out any hope of an early improvement. The restriction of the sugar crop is to be removed, but a larger tonnage does not necessarily mean a larger revenue as the railway rates on sugar vary with every ½ cent per lb. in the price of sugar. Moreover, the Company has still to meet serious road and coastwise shipping competition, and it is taking powers to acquire and operate motor vehicles, steamships, and aeroplanes. The common stock has fallen this year from 70½ to 34½, and the preference, on which the half-yearly dividend due in January is being passed, from 77 to 46. The 5 per cent. irredeemable debentures, which rank as a first charge, and the 4 per cent. redeemable debentures, which rank next, are standing at 70 and 60 to yield 7.14 per cent. and 8.33 per cent. respectively, which is not unattractive in view of their reasonable cover.

The rapid rise of the London Tin Syndicate, a holding company in the Anglo-Oriental group, was discussed in THE NATION of June 16th. The report for the year ending September 30th, 1928, has been published this week. Net profits amounted to £193,353, which has enabled the Syndicate to pay a dividend of 40 per cent. (requiring £160,000), and to carry forward £60,432. The capital is now £500,000, and average subscribed capital for last year is computed at £383,425. The London Tin Syndicate derives its revenue from financial deals, and from dividends on shares in tin-producing and smelting companies. Unfortunately the accounts do not distinguish between these two sources. The Syndicate participated during the year in several capital issues of the Anglo-Oriental group—Toyo Tin, Talerng Tin Dredging, and London Malayan Tin Trust—on which its profits must have been considerable. The issue made by Associated Tin Mines of Nigeria also gave a profit to the Syndicate, but that will come into next year's accounts. The Anglo-Oriental group represents the "bull" view in the tin market, and the recent rise in the metal has been very much in its favour. The London Tin Syndicate shares at 4½ cum dividend yield 9.8 per cent.



